

The Journal of

TEXAS MUSIC HISTORY

2014

Volume 14

Records and the Making of the Texas Jazz Festival
The Outback Texas Quartet and Ode to an Editor
The Cowboy Song as Art Song



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2014-2015

Letter from the Director



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It's been another very successful year at the Center for Texas Music History. We continue to develop new graduate and undergraduate music history courses through Texas State University's Department of History. In fact, we offered our first ever Study Abroad classes this year ("The History of Rock & Roll" and "The History of Texas Music") as part of the Department of History's Study Abroad in Chester (England) program. The courses were so popular with students that we plan to offer them again next summer as part of the 2015 Study Abroad in Chester program.

In addition to developing new courses and other educational programming for students, the Center for Texas Music History also continues to provide student scholarships at Texas State. This year, we awarded the second annual Michael R. Davis Scholarship to Audrey Najera, graduate history major. We are very grateful to Greg Davis, Michael Davis's brother, for establishing this important scholarship as a way to honor his sibling and help support our students' educational endeavors. We also succeeded in raising enough money to permanently endow the new Kent Finlay scholarship. We are very grateful to the Randy Rogers Band, Robin Schoepf and everyone else who contributed so generously to the Finlay scholarship endowment.

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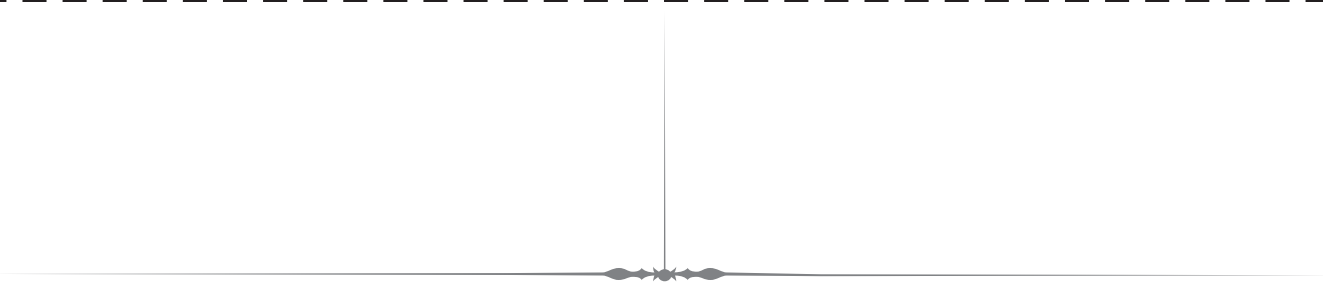
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Tejanos and the Making of the Texas Jazz Festival, 1959-2013

Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr.



The originators of the Texas Jazz Festival as they made music "on the rock" in Corpus Christi Bay in 1962.
Courtesy Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. and the Texas Jazz Festival Archives.



“Vamos, Lupongo. Es gratis.” (“Let’s go, Lupongo. It’s free.”) This is how it all started. A simple invitation by my sister, Lilonga, to go to a jazz festival on a Sunday afternoon at Heritage Park in Corpus Christi, a city of just over 300,000 located on the Texas Gulf Coast about 150 miles north of the Mexican border.¹ Although I was in town only for a few hours, I could not pass up the invitation. “A free jazz festival in Corpus,” I said to myself. “Why not?” Off we went to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Texas Jazz Festival.

Upon arriving, I was surprised not only at the size of the crowd, but at the number of Mexican Americans present, both as performers and spectators. Although popular with many people, jazz is most often associated with African Americans. In fact, jazz is a truly original form of American music that grew mainly out of a combination of such African-American styles as blues, gospel, and ragtime.²

Mexican Americans, for the most part, did not play jazz, or at least that is what I believed at the time. Furthermore, Tejanos, or Texans of Mexican descent, had developed their own musical hybrid known as *música Tejana* (Texas-Mexican music). *Música Tejana*, a blending of rancheras, canciones, conjunto, and other traditional Mexican folk music idioms with such mainstream American musical styles as country, swing, and rock and roll, developed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as Tejanos combined their musical traditions with those of other ethnic groups in the Lone Star State.

South Texas has been the epicenter for the development of *música Tejana*, and Corpus Christi, along with the entire coastal bend area, has produced a number of influential Texas-Mexican artists, including Tony de la Rosa, Isidro López, and Selena Quintanilla. *Música Tejana*, which is rooted in older Mexican folk music, absorbed the accordion and polka from German and Czech immigrants during the nineteenth century and incorporated big band swing and rock and roll during the twentieth century. *Música Tejana* continues to evolve in the twenty-first century, with the inclusion of rap, hip hop, and other newer influences from such artists as A.B. Quintanilla, Jr., DJ Kane, and Ricky Naranjo.³

Perhaps the presence of so many Mexican-American performers and fans at the Texas Jazz Festival should not have come as such a surprise. After all, the centuries-long blending of diverse ethnic musical styles into *música Tejana* is clear evidence that Tejano musicians and audiences

alike are fond of much more than just polkas and rancheras. However, I had never before realized the extent to which Texas Mexicans were involved in the state's vibrant jazz scene.

My curiosity was piqued, and I decided to investigate the role Tejanos had played in the origins and evolution of the Texas Jazz Festival. I soon discovered that Texas Mexicans not only were instrumental in launching the festival, but they also were intimately involved with managing and financing the annual event, selecting performers, and generally shaping the character of the festival as it grew over the decades. Furthermore, it became even more evident just how much of an impact Tejanos have had, not only on jazz and this particular festival, but also on the entire musical landscape of Texas. Likewise, jazz and the Texas Jazz Festival itself also had a significant impact on the entire Texas-Mexican community and its musical development. Consequently, the Texas Jazz

in the evenings "at some person's house" in order to review different jazz albums "that the members (would) bring." Soon, however, they decided to invite bands to play at some of their events on campus.⁵ The first musicians they invited were Al "Beto" Garcia and his new jazz group, the Al Beto Garcia Jazz Sextet. Joe Gallardo, who was Beto Garcia's nephew, also was a member of the Sextet.

In early November, Gallardo called his uncle and invited him to perform at Del Mar College in order to give students a demonstration of "the fine art of jazz."⁶ Eddie Olivares, Sr., one of the musicians in Garcia's group, recalled the invitation.⁷ "We were all members of the Musician's Union, Local 644," he said, "but 'Beto' was the leader.... He played at dances and in hotels all over town."⁸

Beto Garcia agreed to perform at the College, along with four other band members: Eddie Olivares, Sr. (trumpet), Joe

The Texas Jazz Festival serves as a case study of how Tejanos have helped shape the rich and diverse musical heritage of our state and how jazz has further transformed the already eclectic and dynamic Texas-Mexican genre known as música Tejana.

Festival serves as a case study of how Tejanos have helped shape the rich and diverse musical heritage of our state and how jazz has further transformed the already eclectic and dynamic Texas-Mexican genre known as música Tejana.

More generally speaking, this historical study reflects the larger tendency among Mexican Americans to willingly embrace other musical genres, to incorporate their own musical traditions, and in the process, transform the entire musical landscape of the American Southwest and the nation as a whole. It is one more example of the creativity, innovation, and adaptability demonstrated by Mexican-American musicians and audiences throughout the decades.⁴

The Origins of the Texas Jazz Festival, 1959-1961

The Texas Jazz Festival debuted in 1961, but the idea for the now-popular annual event came about a few years earlier. Joe Gallardo and Charles (Skip) Vettters were students at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, and also members of the school's jazz club, which had formed in October 1959 to promote the appreciation of jazz on campus. At first, the jazz club members had fairly modest goals. They planned to meet

Gallardo (piano and trombone), Sal Pedraza (bass), and Raul Cuesta (alto saxophone). The group played at the school's Harvin Student Center on November 9, 1959.⁹ It was a very cold evening, and organizers did not expect a large crowd. As Garcia recalled, "It was 32 degrees....so we were expecting 40 or 50 people from the college.... We were surprised when 150 people showed up on that cold night." Eddie Olivares also expressed surprise at the size of the crowd. "We were flabbergasted that so many people showed up that night in the Harvin Center," he recalled. During the intermission, Red Camp, a well-known local jazz pianist, asked if he could sit in. Gallardo, who had been playing piano, switched to trombone, while Camp took over the keyboards. Olivares recalled that the ensemble played Duke Ellington's signature tune, "Take the 'A' Train," as well as "How High the Moon" and "Besame Mucho," among others. The show was such a success that it inspired the organizers to plan additional future events.¹⁰

Five months later, the jazz club sponsored another concert on March 20, 1960.¹¹ Two groups performed that day—Chester Rupe's All Stars and Al Beto Garcia's group. Rupe was a nationally-acclaimed jazz guitarist who lived in Corpus Christi. Five other musicians played with him that Sunday afternoon:

Dr. Bob Parker (trumpet), Sal Pedraza (bass), Dr. J. B. Floyd (piano), Jack Rumbley (drums), and Joe Gallardo (trombone). Beto Garcia's group included six members, two of whom also played with Rupe's group: Eddie Olivares (trumpet), Sal Pedraza (bass), Ralph Duran (piano), Al Beto Garcia (drums), Roy Cuesta (sax), and Joe Gallardo (trombone).¹² Similar to the earlier shows on campus, this concert was a big success, attracting more than 350 fans.¹³

Following the success of the March concert, jazz club members eagerly began preparing for the final concert of the school year.¹⁴ Because of the large crowd expected, Frank Hankins, Del Mar's librarian and a jazz enthusiast himself, requested the free use of the College's Richardson Auditorium, which was much larger than the Harvin Student Center. The administration agreed, and on Sunday May 1, 1960, the jazz club hosted a third concert at Del Mar College. Unlike the earlier shows, this concert was held in conjunction with

Texas Jazz Festival Society (TJFS).²¹ One of the TJFS's first decisions was to hold an annual festival, to be formally named the Texas Jazz Festival.²² A city-wide jazz festival, Garcia believed, would make Corpus Christi "the center of jazz influence in the Lone Star State."²³

Garcia asked several of his friends for assistance, including Wanda Gregory, a well-known jazz vocalist living in Corpus Christi.²⁴ She readily agreed.²⁵ He also sought out others who shared his dream of promoting jazz as a unique art form and as a means of bringing financial support to the local music community. City council and business leaders seemed to understand the cultural significance of such an event, but they also recognized the economic potential a jazz festival would have for boosting the city's tourist industry. One individual in particular, John Nugent, a public relations executive with the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, offered to help with publicity.²⁶

The overwhelming success of the shows convinced several people that the city was ready for additional jazz concerts.

Buccaneer Days, an annual city-wide celebration that attracted thousands of visitors to Corpus Christi for a variety of musical and entertainment activities.¹⁵

Three jazz groups performed that Sunday afternoon: Chester Rupe and His All Stars, Bobby Galvan and his Octet, and Beto Garcia and his Texas Jazz All-Stars.¹⁶ Bobby Galvan came from a musical family in Corpus Christi. His dad, as well as his three brothers, Sammy, Eddie, and Ralph, were all musicians. Eddie and Bobby Galvan also founded one of the most popular dance halls in Corpus Christi—the Galvan Ballroom.¹⁷ Garcia, who had played in the first two jazz concerts, appeared with his original group but performed under the new name of the Texas Jazz All-Stars.¹⁸ In addition to Galvan, Rupe, Garcia, and their bands, two special guests, George Erwin, a tenor saxophonist from Houston, and Ralph Duran, a local pianist who was then living in San Antonio, also played.¹⁹ The May 1st concert at Del Mar College attracted an audience of 1,200 people. According to one journalist, the event was "a smiling, hand-clapping, foot-stomping success!"²⁰

The overwhelming success of these three shows convinced several people, especially Beto Garcia, that the city was ready for additional jazz concerts. Soon after the May event, he and some friends decided to establish an organization to promote jazz in Corpus Christi. This group eventually became the

Once he had garnered support for the upcoming jazz festival, Garcia began searching for a location. Del Mar College was not an option, because the administration had already decided that its facilities would no longer be available.²⁷ However, Garcia soon found a suitable site for the concert—the very popular People's Street T-head in downtown Corpus Christi. At that time, the city's musicians' union, Local 644, was presenting "Sunday-by-the-Sea" concerts on the T-Head, a paved pier jutting out into the city's marina. The city donated the site and equipment and the local union paid the musicians out of its benefit fund. Garcia approached union officials and convinced them to set aside one of the Sunday concerts for jazz. They agreed, and this became the location for the first annual Texas Jazz Festival.²⁸

Thus with the support of the Chamber of Commerce, city leaders, the local union, a dedicated group of volunteers, and countless fans, the first annual Texas Jazz Festival took place on July 8, 1961, at the band shell on the People's Street T-Head. Five jazz groups performed that day: Red Camp and his Group, Bobby Galvan and his Swinging Octet, Al Beto Garcia and his Six Sounds, Chester Rupe and his All Stars, and Rudy Garcia and his Progressive Latin Rhythms. Three guest vocalists—Wanda Gregory, Jewell King, and Bobby Hawks—also sang.²⁹

The festival also included an unannounced guest—Houston trumpet player Luis Gasca. Gasca, an emerging Latin jazz artist who would soon achieve national and international recognition, heard about the festival and arrived unannounced. He introduced himself and asked if he could play with one of the groups. “We already had begun playing,” Garcia remembered. Bobby Galvan, however, quickly offered to give up part of his time so that Gasca could play. The audience response to Gasca was very enthusiastic. He “stole the show,” Garcia recalled.³⁰

The 1961 jazz festival drew such large crowds that it created traffic jams on the streets leading up to the T-Head. Police had to be called in to direct traffic leading from Cole Park, a seaside park located several miles from the festival site, to the Bayfront.³¹ Within a three year period then, a gathering of musicians, led by a few Tejano performers, had organized several successful jazz festivals, recruited grassroots business, civic, and public support, and laid the foundations for one of the most enduring cultural events in the state. Over the next several decades, the original founders, in conjunction with many jazz fans and volunteers, would institutionalize and expand one of the most popular, unique, and innovative, entertainment institutions in the Southwest.

The Uniqueness of the Texas Jazz Festival

The Texas Jazz Festival was a community venture supported by many individuals, groups, and entities, including Skip Veters, Wanda Gregory, Julia Garcia and such organizations as the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, all of whom played key roles in the origins and growth of the festival. However, a few individuals—the five original founders to be discussed below—were key in defining its special character. While the founders all agreed to foster an appreciation of the diversity of jazz, they made sure that the TJF, unlike other jazz festivals throughout the country, was unique in several distinct ways.

First of all, the Texas Jazz Festival had to be free and open to the public, so that all individuals, not simply those who were familiar with it, could enjoy and learn to appreciate jazz. Beto, in particular, argued from the beginning that the TJF had to be free “to everyone that digs [jazz].”³² Even several decades later, when the TJF was in debt, and some members believed that the only way for the festival to survive was to charge a minimal price, Beto Garcia refused, stating that, “as long as I am on this earth, there will never be an admission charge.”³³ To this day, the TJF is “the only major jazz festival in the world that is free to the public.”³⁴

Second, the festival had to showcase the many local jazz musicians, especially those of Mexican descent. One of the founders noted in the 1970s that the festival needed to show people that Mexican Americans were as talented as anyone

else and could play any type of music they chose. “I want to get my race where they belong,” he said in 1964, “to show the world they’re gifted, really good musicians.”³⁵

Finally, the festival needed to demonstrate the powerful ways in which Latin rhythms from south of the border were incorporated into American jazz. Beto Garcia described this unique brand of jazz by saying “We (Latin jazz musicians) blow the same jazz they do on the West Coast and then the rhythm men throw in those Latin beats... We add a little more to it.”³⁶

The Texas Jazz Festival: Founding Pioneers

There were five particular individuals who led the way in establishing and defining the Texas Jazz Festival: Joe Gallardo, Eddie Olivares, Al “Beto” Garcia, Raul Cuesta, and Sal Pedraza.³⁷ Gallardo made the phone call to his uncle, Beto Garcia, which helped make the very first jazz concert at Del Mar College possible. However, Gallardo left Corpus Christi soon afterwards in order to pursue his dream of playing jazz internationally, although he did return to play the TJF.

Joe Gallardo was born on September 29, 1939, in Corpus Christi. At age six, he began taking music lessons from his father, Jose A. Gallardo, a piano professor. Eight years later, Joe learned to play the trombone and soon joined the Corpus Christi Youth Symphony as the first chair and soloist. Gallardo attended Del Mar College under a full scholarship. During his freshman year, he earned first place in an annual competition.³⁸ While in college, he also played with several local bands, including Bobby Galvan and his group, Al “Beto” Garcia and his All-Stars, and the Corpus Christi Symphony.³⁹

After college, Gallardo joined the Luis Arcaz Orchestra, one of Mexico’s best-known big bands.⁴⁰ Gallardo also performed with the Stan Kenton Orchestra for a short time before joining the U.S. Army in 1963. He was stationed in Stuttgart, Germany, where he performed with the Seventh Army Band and toured throughout Europe. Gallardo later recalled, “I met all the band leaders and musicians in Europe,” he said. “I made some wonderful contacts.”⁴¹

After leaving the military, Gallardo returned to Texas for a brief period and played with several Tex-Mex groups, including Little Joe y La Familia. In 1974, Gallardo wrote the song “Amanecer (Dawn)” for the Mongo Santamaria Band in New York. Four years later, the song and album by the same name won the Grammy for “Best Latin recording.”⁴²

In 1978, Gallardo returned to Europe and continued touring with such prominent American entertainers as Stan Kenton, Chet Baker, Lionel Hampton, Stan Getz, Arturo Sandoval, Woody Herman, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Liza Minnelli, Peggy Lee, and many others. “The pay is much better [in Europe] than in [the United States],” he noted in



Sal Pedraza, Bass; Eddie Olivares, Trumpet; Joe Gallardo, Trombone; Raul Cuesta, Alto Sax. July 4, 1961.
Courtesy Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. and the Texas Jazz Festival Archives.

1980. “[M]usicians also get much more time off, six or eight weeks in summer, five in winter, and two in the spring.”⁴³

While in Europe, Gallardo recorded the album *Joe Gallardo: Latino Blue*, which combined Latin and jazz influences into what he termed “a fusion of two styles.”⁴⁴ In 1990, Gallardo became a member of the NDR Big Band in Hamburg, Germany. In addition to performing, he taught as a music professor in Germany until 2006, when he retired.⁴⁵

Years earlier, while still students at Del Mar College, Joe Gallardo, Skip Vettters, and several others, discussed the idea of establishing an organization that would promote jazz music in Corpus Christi. “My conception of jazz,” Gallardo said in 2009, “has always been to include everybody that plays jazz and to bring in people from other cities like Houston that could collaborate, hear others play and learn.”⁴⁶ By launching the Texas Jazz Festival, Gallardo, Vettters, and their fellow jazz enthusiasts created an event in Corpus Christi at which musicians could collaborate and innovate while performing different styles of jazz.

Sal Pedraza and Raul Cuesta also played important roles in starting the Texas Jazz Festival. Pedraza began as a French horn player, but when Beto Garcia needed a bass player, Pedraza switched to bass. He played for years with the Corpus Christi

Symphony and led his own jazz group, Bossa Tres. Pedraza and his wife, Tana, designed, built, and installed the jazz-themed stage backdrop that was used during the earlier Texas Jazz Festivals. Raul Cuesta, who was born into a prominent musical family, quickly became an accomplished saxophone player. In 1966, he moved to Houston, where he worked with many notable musicians. However, Cuesta regularly returned to Corpus Christi to play the Texas Jazz Festival. Both Pedraza and Cuesta donated their time and talents to promoting jazz and the TJF throughout the state.⁴⁷ Pedraza died in 1991 and Cuesta in 2006.⁴⁸

Undoubtedly, the two most influential founding members of the Texas Jazz Festival were Al “Beto” Garcia and Eddie Olivares, Sr. Garcia was born in 1928 to a family of jazz musicians. His father, Alberto Garcia, started the Alberto Garcia Jazz Band in 1924. Beto Garcia’s mom was a vocalist and pianist and occasionally played drums in her husband’s group. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Garcia’s parents played at a North Beach nightclub to earn extra money. All of their sons, including Beto, Manuel, Pete, and Rudy, became successful jazz musicians.

Beto Garcia began as a trumpet player, but during a rehearsal with Eddie Olivares, Sr. and Tony Hernandez, Garcia was

asked to play drums, since the drummer had not shown up. From that moment on, Garcia made the drums his primary instrument.⁴⁹ In 1956, he formed his own group—the Al “Beto” Garcia Jazz Sextet. Its members included Joe Gallardo on trombone, Eddie Olivares on trumpet, Raul Cuesta on alto sax, Sal Pedraza on bass, Ralph Duran on piano, and Garcia on drums. With the exception of Duran, this was the group that eventually played the first jazz concert at Del Mar College, thereby helping lay the foundation for the Texas Jazz Festival.

Two of Garcia’s biggest musical influences were Pablo Ruiz and Luis Arcaráz. Ruiz, a Mexican composer and band leader, was considered by many to be “the Stan Kenton of Mexico.”⁵⁰ Arcaráz led one of the most popular orchestras in Mexico during the 1940s and 1950s. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not play Latin rhythms. Instead, he performed mostly American and Mexican pop songs. Arcaráz developed a large following throughout Latin America and in

February 28, 1931, in Mercedes, Texas. His father was a violinist in a jazz band in the early 1940s. Olivares’s uncle was the famed saxophonist Ernie Caceres, who played with the Glenn Miller Orchestra on such hits as “In the Mood.”⁵⁵

As a child, Eddie Olivares taught himself to play trumpet by watching his father perform.

In 1946, when Eddie Olivares was a seventh-grader at Northside Junior High School, his brother bought him a trumpet. Olivares went on to join a local group and play his first gig at The Golden Triangle, a nightclub located in the Westside area of Corpus Christi. The band eventually began performing there on weekends.⁵⁶

After graduating from high school, Olivares attended Del Mar College, which offered musical scholarships as a way to attract students to perform at football games and other school activities. Accepting this scholarship was difficult for Olivares, because he was already earning good money working

As a child, Eddie Olivares taught himself to play trumpet by watching his father perform.

the United States as well during the late 1940s and early 1950s, earning him the nickname, the “Glen Miller of Mexico.”⁵¹

Beto Garcia drew his musical inspiration from a variety of sources, but jazz remained his primary interest. He was convinced that the jazz found throughout South Texas was unique, in that it incorporated certain Texas, Mexican, and Latin American influences not found in other regions. As Garcia said at the second annual jazz festival in 1962, “we think Latin rhythms are ideally suited to both a steady beat and a wide range of creative improvisation...and we find the Latin mood adds a new dimension to our sound.... It’s jazz all the way, but you can still feel the influence of our Mexican heritage.”⁵²

Beto Garcia was the driving force behind the Texas Jazz Festival, especially in the early years. He and his wife, Julia, worked tirelessly for decades to secure sponsors, performers, and venues for the festival. As one source noted, Beto “remains the backbone of the festival and the Jazz Society by being an active Board Member for Life, not missing any meetings, monthly concerts or festivals.” Because of his lifetime devotion to promoting jazz in the region, Garcia was inducted into the South Texas Music Walk of Fame in 2006, some eight years before his death on March 3, 2014.⁵³

Another key founding member of the Texas Jazz Festival was Edward (Eddie) Garza Olivares, Sr.⁵⁴ Olivares was born

in nightclubs around town. Nevertheless, he worked hard to balance both his academic and musical careers and graduated from Del Mar College in 1952. Afterwards, he enrolled in the U.S. Army for two years. Following his military service, Olivares attended North Texas State (now the University of North Texas) in Denton and The University of Texas at Austin, earning a bachelor of music degree in 1956 and a master of music degree in 1961.

After college, Olivares taught music in Laredo, Texas, for two years before returning to Corpus Christi. He worked at Sundeen Junior High School for several years, and, in 1967, he transferred to Moody High School, where he conducted the school band. Although this was the late 1960s, and the big band era was long past its peak, Olivares made sure to teach his students jazz and swing tunes. He also served as director of the jazz ensemble, as well as an instructor of jazz history at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Olivares retired from the public school system in 1991 but continued teaching jazz history at A&M while also performing locally.

Olivares absorbed a variety of musical influences while growing up. His father and brother introduced him to jazz and big band swing music.⁵⁷ Over the decades, Olivares fronted his own dance band or performed in bands that backed up well-known musicians, including Tony Bennett, Julio Iglesias,

and Vickie Carr. He also performed with the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, the Corpus Christi Municipal Band, and various local jazz and dance ensembles. As one of the founders of the Texas Jazz Festival, Olivares performed there for many years with the TJF All-Stars, a quintet composed of the five original festival founders. Likewise, he directed the inter-denominational jazz choir for three decades, beginning in 1973. In 2009, he was inducted into the Water Street Walk of Fame, located in Corpus Christi.⁵⁸

Olivares shared Beto Garcia's dream of promoting a jazz festival in Corpus Christi, which would showcase the talents of local musicians. "We were feeling way back we wanted to promote South Texas jazz and its Latin sound," said Olivares. "We wanted to help put Corpus Christi on the map through music and we wanted to push jazz education for the young to perpetuate jazz here."⁵⁹ By helping organize and perpetuate

Stan Kenton's performance at the TJF elevated the event's stature in the jazz world and convinced the organizers to do whatever was necessary to try and recruit other high-profile jazz musicians. Soon the festival was regularly featuring a number of prominent artists, including Clark Terry of *The Tonight Show* Band, who headlined in 1969 and again in 1977. Al Hirt, the world-famous jazz trumpeter, performed at the 11th annual Texas Jazz Festival in 1971. Others who have appeared over the years include Cal Tjader, G.T.Hogan, Arnet Cobb, Jimmy Ford, Tony Campise, Warren Covington, Marian McPartland, Mary Lou Williams, Evelyn Blakey, Conte Candoli, Plas Johnson, Dick Hyman, Milt Hinton, Bobby Rosengarden, Spyro Gyra, Carl Fontana, David "Fathead" Newman, Frank Rosolino, Brian Torff, Horace Grigsby, Bu Pleasant, Kirk Whalum, Buddy DeFranco, Terry Gibbs, Jake Hanna, Hank Jones, Zoot Sims, and Monty Budwig.

The Texas Jazz Festival also showcased a variety of musicians from high schools, universities, and communities across the state and beyond.

the TJF, he did just that. Through his efforts and those of his fellow jazz musicians, Garcia helped increase local awareness and interest in jazz. The growing popularity of the festival and its many activities, such as the jazz cruise, jazz mass, jazz clinics, and jazz concerts, showed that others besides the original founders of the TJF also appreciated this music.

During the next several decades, the Texas Jazz Festival established a growing presence in the cultural life of Corpus Christi. Although it did not have a permanent home or a strong financial base until the 1990s, the festival continued to grow in popularity. One of the major reasons for this was the musicians who attended. Originally, the festival was intended to showcase local jazz musicians, but after 1968, it also began to feature such nationally prominent jazz artists as Stan Kenton.

Since the Texas Jazz Festival had very little funding in the late 1960s, organizers hoped to persuade Stan Kenton to perform for free. When Beto Garcia spoke to Kenton, he informed him that the TJF had no money to pay him. "[I]n fact," Garcia told him, "we don't have a penny to our names." "But we believe in miracles," he added. "We want you. We need you." To everyone's surprise, Kenton agreed to perform without his group for only "\$750 plus plane fare." "We'll raise it," Garcia said. "I don't know how, but we'll raise it." The TJF did raise the money, and Kenton appeared as the festival's headliner in 1968.⁶⁰

In keeping with the bi-cultural character of the festival, many prominent Latino artists have also appeared. Among the best-known are Pablo Beltrán Ruiz y su Orquesta (Sinaloa, Mexico), Luis Arcaráz y su Orquesta (Mexico City, Mexico), Claudio Rosas and his Orchestra (Tampico, México), Emilio Caceres (San Antonio, Texas), Luis Gasca (Los Angeles, California), and Adela Dalto (New York City). The Texas Jazz Festival also showcased a variety of musicians from high schools, universities, and communities across the state and beyond. These included the Alamo City Dixieland Band, The University of Texas at Austin Jazz Orchestra, the Southwest Missouri State University Jazz Ensemble, The High School for the Visual and Performing Arts jazz band from Houston, the Airmen of Note (an Armed Forces jazz group), Paco Jiménez Band (Tampico, Mexico), Claudio Rosas y Su Orquesta (Tampico, Mexico), and the Ray Barrera Orchestra (Reynosa, Mexico). Such popular local jazz vocalists as Horace Grigsby, Jewell King, Wanda Gregory, Corolyn Blanchard, Bu Pleasant, Curt Warren, Fattburger, Jimmy Ford, and Richard Elliot also performed at the Texas Jazz Festival.⁶¹

Dozens of musicians performed regularly at the Texas Jazz Festival over the decades, and a significant number of these were Mexican Americans. Some of the "regulars" were Chester Rupe and his band and Tony Campise. Among the Mexican-American regulars were Beto Garcia and the Texas Jazz



On the People's Street T-Head in July of 1962. Courtesy Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. and the Texas Jazz Festival Archives.

Festival All-Stars, a variety of bands that included the Galvan brothers (Eddie, Bobby, and Ralph), Rene Sandoval and the Houstonians, and Shorty Lupe and his group.

In addition, the Texas Jazz Festival featured many younger musicians over the decades as a way to cultivate an appreciation for jazz among the youth. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the festival invited some of the children and grandchildren of the founders to perform, including Beto Garcia's grandsons, Jon and Michael Perez.

Institutionalization and Expansion of the Texas Jazz Festival, 1962-2011

Between 1960 and 1999, the Texas Jazz Festival overcame several significant challenges to become one of the city's most important cultural events and to earn national and international recognition. The first major accomplishment

took place in 1968, when the Texas Jazz Festival Society (TJFS) was incorporated as a non-profit organization. Beto Garcia, Bill Hipp, Virgil Howard, Eddie Olivares, Sal Pedraza, and Wanda Gregory are listed as the incorporators of the TJFS. Gregory especially played a crucial role in organizing members, articulating the society's goals, and working with others to develop the articles of incorporation. Virgil Howard, a *pro bono* attorney for the TJFS, assisted in writing the bylaws.

Among the TJFS's primary goals were "to promote and present the performance of live jazz as an American art form; to showcase local and area talent; to foster tourism in the city of Corpus Christi; to encourage and aid in the education of young jazz artists; and to promote and present the annual Texas Jazz Festival free of charge so that all citizens of South Texas might enjoy the best in American Jazz."⁶²

The incorporation of the TJFS proved crucial for the survival and growth of the Texas Jazz Festival. The TJFS provided a mechanism for promoting jazz in the Corpus Christi area and for raising money to fund the festival on an ongoing basis. Once established, the society successfully organized and managed the annual Texas Jazz Festival, as well as other events held throughout the city.

The TJFS accomplished its second major goal in late 1999, which was establishing a permanent location for the Texas Jazz Festival. From its origins as a jazz concert at Del Mar College, the festival moved from one venue to another between 1961 and 1999. The first three concerts in 1959 and 1960 were held in two different locations at Del Mar College. In 1961 and 1962, the festivals took place at the city's T-Heads, a popular tourist spot on the Corpus Christi Marina.

In 1963, the Texas Jazz Festival moved to the Memorial Coliseum, a large indoor facility located on the Corpus Christi bayfront. The Coliseum was home to the festival for the following 24 years. In 1988, the festival relocated to the new Watergarden of the Bayfront Plaza Convention Center, a beautiful pavilion next to the Corpus Christi Convention Center. The festival remained there for several years until the city passed an ordinance forbidding large festivals on its grounds.⁶³ In 1994, the festival returned to Memorial Coliseum, where it remained until 1997.

In 1998, the Texas Jazz Festival finally found a permanent home at Heritage Park in downtown Corpus Christi. The site of 12 historic Victorian houses preserved from Corpus Christi's early years, Heritage Park features an award-winning community center that provides a variety of programs throughout the year showcasing the artistic and cultural diversity of South Texas.⁶⁴ Heritage Park has provided a beautiful and highly functional setting for the long-term relocation and expansion of the festival.

Over the years, the Texas Jazz Festival has expanded its list of activities and attracted ever larger crowds. It grew from a one-day festival with a single stage in 1961 to a three-day event with three stages by 1988. Attendance increased from around 300 in 1961 to over 17,000 in 1987.⁶⁵ With its 1987 move from the Coliseum to the Watergarden of the Bayfront Plaza Convention Center, the TJF also began providing continuous entertainment at different venues throughout the city, featuring as many as 24 jazz groups performing for free. Organizers also decided to move the festival from July to the cooler month of October, as a way of attracting more people.

Throughout the 1990s, the Texas Jazz Festival continued to grow in size and popularity. In 1993, for instance, some 43 bands participated in the 33rd Annual Festival, including Beto y los Fairlanes and Plas Johnson. The following year,

the Festival moved back to the Coliseum, where performers included prominent saxophonist Kirk Whalum, legendary drummer Louis Bellson, and renowned trumpeter Marvin Stamm. It was around this time that organizers added a third stage in order to accommodate growing crowds and an increasing influx of tourists.

During the early twenty-first century, the number of bands performing surpassed 50. Organizers also added more food options and more arts and crafts vendors, and the scope of activities expanded to include jazz cruises, jazz masses, and jazz workshops. This helped increase attendance to over 45,000 by 2002.⁶⁶

The Jazz Mass, 1973-2013

One of the most unique and popular events to grow out of the Texas Jazz Festival has been the Jazz Mass. Beto Garcia and Eddie Olivares had always believed that the music they loved—jazz—was a “gift” from God, for which they should demonstrate their gratitude through religious celebration.⁶⁷ Consequently, they decided to start a “jazz mass” in 1976, which Olivares explained would be “a true liturgical celebration of the Roman Catholic Mass. It is prayer, praise and worship.”⁶⁸

The typical Catholic Mass is divided into two parts, the first being instructional with readings from the Bible. The second part takes place after the sermon and is a remembrance of the Last Supper. The jazz mass built on this model but also added music to the service. “We are not free to do just anything we want,” Olivares noted, however “the musicians are professional musicians and the music played is appropriate to the order of the Mass.”⁶⁹

The Jazz Mass was first performed as a Christmas Midnight Mass in 1973 at Holy Cross Church, a small Catholic church located in the northern part of the city. The majority of those attending the church were working-class African Americans. The use of jazz in the Catholic mass made this event unique. “The spirituality of the Mass is upbeat, which is a little different for a Catholic Mass,” said Marsha Hardeman, a member of the Holy Cross Church and co-director of its choir for many decades. According to Hardeman, the Jazz Mass was very uplifting and participants found the Mass to be a joyful experience.⁷⁰

Anne Dodson, a parishioner at Holy Cross Church, initiated this effort to have a jazz mass in the early 1970s. She approached Pastor Father Jerome Capone from Holy Cross Church and told him that a jazz mass might lead to a more meaningful and stirring liturgy. Father Capone agreed and asked Eddie Olivares to lead a Christmas performance of Father Clarence Rivers's mass titled “Mass for the



Jazz concert at Del Mar College. Courtesy Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. and the Texas Jazz Festival Archives.

Brotherhood of Man.”⁷¹ Rivers’s work was a jazz-inspired musical composition that integrated religious chants, hymns and sacred songs with jazz, gospel, and Negro spirituals.⁷² Olivares agreed to do this and helped form a choir made up of parishioners, which he directed and invited some friends to play, including pianist Lloyd Whitley and Beto Garcia.⁷³ The jazz mass enjoyed tremendous success that evening and soon led to a significant increase in Sunday attendance at Holy Cross Church.

Choir co-director, Marsha Hardeman, was “just a kid” in 1973, when she sang in the first Jazz Mass.⁷⁴ As she later recalled, “It was like one big happy family.... Back then the parish was thriving and people would come from all over the city to worship.” “As a result,” she says, “we became more multiethnic.”⁷⁵ In 1975, after another performance of Rivers’s mass, Father Thomas Meaney, pastor of Holy Cross Church, suggested that the Jazz Mass be performed on Sunday morning as part of the Texas Jazz Festival. Organizers agreed, and the following year started a new tradition of holding the Jazz Mass on the Sunday morning of the festival.⁷⁶

Because of the popularity of the Jazz Mass, more non-parishioners began joining the choir. By 1975, it included singers and musicians from other parishes and denominations,

including members of the Texas Jazz Festival Society. In order to better reflect the growing number of non-parishioners and even non-Catholics, organizers named the ensemble the Corpus Christi Interdenominational Choir.

The Interdenominational Choir sang at the Jazz Mass and also performed at other events. By 1977, for example, the choir had presented concert performances of the “Mass of (sic) the Brotherhood of Man” at the Front Porch, a special events stage at the Corpus Christi Museum, the South Christian Church, the Greenwood Public Library, the Wesley Methodist Church, and other Catholic churches in the area.⁷⁷ On Sunday, October 23, 1977, the choir sang the Jazz Mass at the Corpus Christi Museum, with nearly 100 people in attendance. A few jazz musicians, including Eddie Olivares, accompanied the choir. The performers sat on the museum’s stage, which resembled the front porch of a nineteenth-century home. As one journalist reported, those artists who performed with the choir “increased the feeling of a neighborhood festival by melting into the crowd after the Mass.”⁷⁸

In 1978, the choir presented Rivers’s mass in at least two different locations. The first took place at the Front Porch on February 21, while the second occurred at Holy Cross Church on Sunday, July 11, with Pastor Meaney presiding. On this

day, the choir sang, and a jazz combo comprised of Beto Garcia on drums, Eddie Olivares on trumpet, Bobby Garcia on piano, and Raul Rios on saxophone, performed. Ruby Melton and Eddie Olivares directed the group.⁷⁹

In the years to come, the Jazz Mass became increasingly popular. Prominent musicians from across the country heard about it and wanted to participate. In addition to some of the Texas Jazz Festival founders already mentioned, renowned Austin saxophonist Tony Campise, Charlie Prause, and vocalist Horace Grigsby, both from Houston, and Carolyn Blanchard played at the Jazz Mass. Other well-known artists who performed included Clark Terry, Frank Rosolino, and Louis Bellson. Erin Wright, a popular bass player from Houston, said that she stopped “hanging out” with other musicians after the Saturday night festival performances so that she would not miss the Sunday morning mass. Wright attended several of the masses and eventually performed in the 1995 Jazz Mass.⁸⁰

Other parishes throughout Corpus Christi invited the choir and jazz musicians to play in their churches. In order to accommodate all of these requests, the mass moved to different locations around the city. Between 1975 and 2012, it was performed at Holy Cross Church, Corpus Christi Cathedral, St. Patrick's Church (1986), Watergarden Bayfront Convention Center Plaza, Memorial Coliseum, Del Mar College, and Most Precious Blood Catholic Church. (See Appendix A for the various locations of Jazz Mass performances.)

The Jazz Mass also was performed at Corpus Christi Cathedral on special occasions. For example, in 1979, Mary Lou Williams agreed to come to the Jazz Festival and perform her mass. Williams was an American jazz pianist, composer, and arranger who wrote, arranged, and recorded hundreds of songs. One of her recordings, *Music for Peace*, came to be known as “Mary Lou's Mass.”⁸¹ Williams rehearsed with the choir at Holy Cross, but, in order to accommodate the crowd that was expected, the mass took place at the larger Corpus Christi Cathedral. Williams hoped to return to Corpus Christi to perform her mass at Holy Cross, but she died in 1981 before she could fulfill that wish.

In 1983, the Jazz Mass again moved from Holy Cross Church to Corpus Christi Cathedral for another special occasion. In this case, Charlie Prause, a Houston jazz musician, had composed what he called “The Mass of Corpus Christi.” He performed the mass with an orchestra made up of trumpet, trombone, French horn, tuba, tympani, chimes, saxophone, flute, and a rhythm section. Prause's “Mass of Corpus Christi” was very successful, drawing a large and enthusiastic crowd.

In 1985, the Jazz Mass returned to Holy Cross Church. Along with his wife, Ginny, Bob McAuliffe, a well-known jazz musician who was suffering from terminal cancer, wrote

a new mass for Corpus Christi. Bu Pleasant, a renowned jazz pianist, performed the McAuliffes' “Mass of Faith” to a large audience.⁸² To accommodate the overflow crowd, organizers set up a closed circuit television to broadcast the mass as it was being performed to the nearby parish hall.⁸³

In 1993, Father Frank J. Coco, a Jesuit retreat master and jazz clarinetist stationed in Louisiana, celebrated the Jazz Mass for the first time. Father Coco began to play the clarinet and saxophone at age 13 during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Four years later, he joined the priesthood and entered the Jesuit Seminary in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. In the 1960s, he met the jazz clarinetist, Pete Fountain, at the bandleader's Bourbon Street club in New Orleans. Fountain invited him to play and was very impressed with his musical skills. “If the ‘Jesuit Jazzman’ had not chosen the priesthood,” Fountain noted, “he would have been a professional musician.”⁸⁴ From 1993 until his death in 2006, Father Coco celebrated or assisted in celebrating the Jazz Mass, always closing the service with his rendition of the hymn, “Just a Closer Walk with Thee.” Father Coco was eventually named the official Chaplain of the Texas Jazz Festival Society.⁸⁵

Conclusion

Texas-Mexican musicians have always drawn from a broad array of influences to shape their own music. As shown in this essay, jazz has also been an important part of the musical repertoire of Tejanos musicians. This brief history has highlighted the important role that Tejanos have played in founding and perpetuating one of the most popular musical festivals in the state over the past 50 years—the Texas Jazz Festival. By helping to create and popularize this festival, Tejanos contributed in their own distinct ways to shaping the contours and content of jazz in the Lone Star State. Texas jazz, i.e., jazz infused with Latin rhythms, grew in popularity as a result of Tejanos participation in this festival, ultimately adding to the complex mosaic of ethnic musical styles found in Texas.⁸⁶

This case study is more than simply a history of a musical festival. It is also about the vital role that Tejanos have played in shaping Texas music and a reminder of how the many contributions made by Tejanos to Texas music are often overlooked or under-recognized. This article also highlights the long-standing willingness among Tejanos to embrace other musical styles, incorporate their own influences, and, in the process, reshape the entire musical landscape of the American Southwest. ★

Appendix A: Locations of Various Jazz Mass Performances

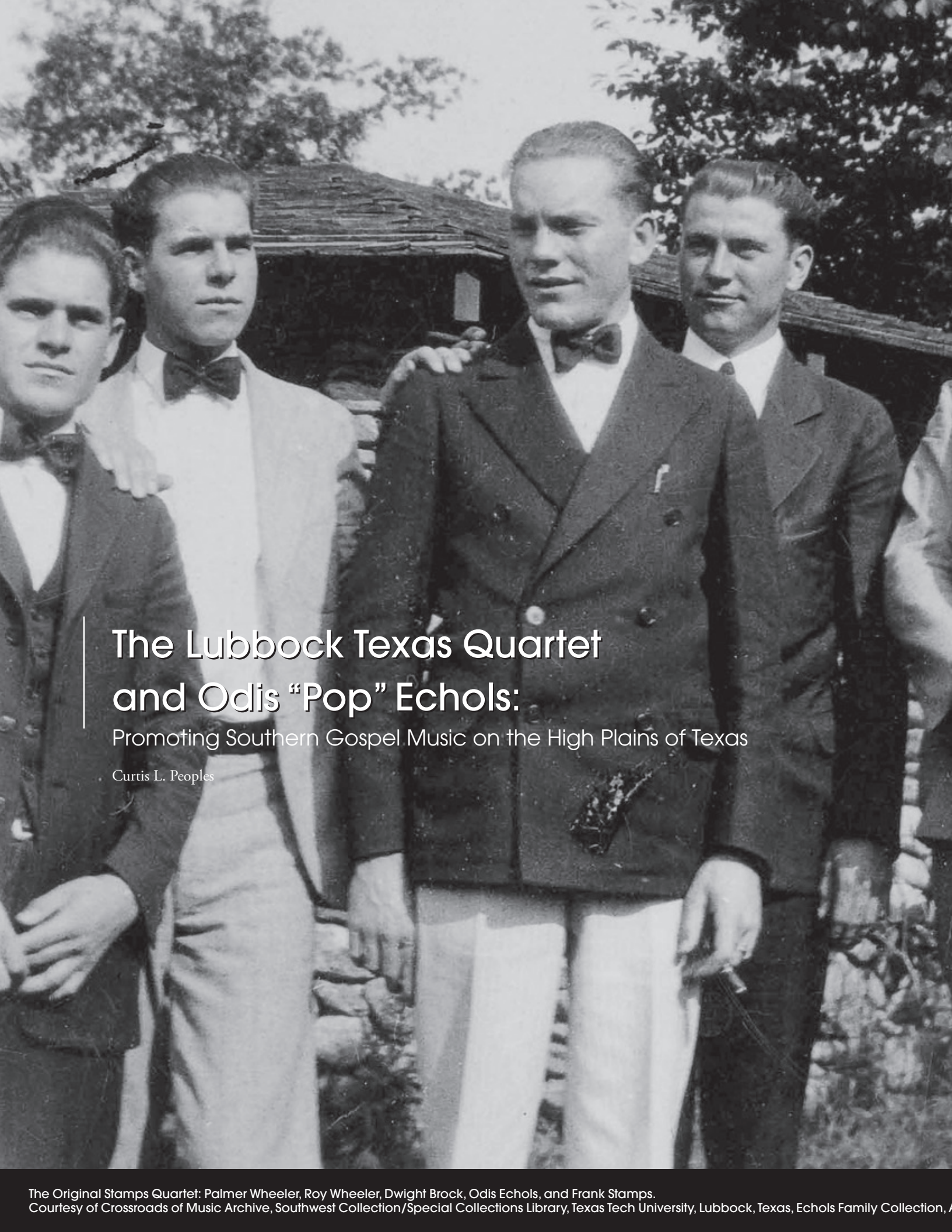
- 1973 Christmas Midnight Mass, Holy Cross Church
- 1974 Christmas Midnight mass, Holy Cross Church
- 1975 Easter Sunday, Holy Cross Church
Father Thomas Meaney, its pastor, was the celebrant.
CC Interdenominational Choir formed, Dir. Eddie Olivares, assisted by Ruby Melton for one year.
- 1976 Holy Cross Church
- 1977 Holy Cross*
- 1978 Holy Cross*
- 1979 Corpus Christi Cathedral
Mary Lou Williams performs Mary Lou's Mass
- 1980 Holy Cross*
- 1981 Holy Cross*
- 1982 Holy Cross*
- 1983 Corpus Christi Cathedral
Charlie Prause performs Mass of Corpus Christi with brass choir.
- 1984 Holy Cross Church
- 1985 Holy Cross Church
Bob McAuliffe's Mass of Faith performed with Bu Pleasant, a renowned jazz pianist. A closed circuit television picture of the mass was transmitted to the nearby parish hall.
- 1986 St. Patrick's Church (NEW LOCATION W/IN PARISH)
St. Patrick's pastor Msgr. Patrick Higgins was celebrant.
- 1987 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 1988 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
Celebrant, Most Rev Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D.,
Auxiliary Bishop of the Galveston-Houston Diocese.
Group: 5 of 7 TJF founders: Joe Gallardo, Beto Garcia,
Wanda Gregory, Sal Pedraza, and Eddie Olivares.
- 1989 front yard of Holy Cross Church
Celebrant: Rev. Wolfgang Mims (Victoria),
Msgr. Robert Freeman, pastor, Holy Cross Church at that time, con-celebrant.
- 1990 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 1991 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 1992 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 1993 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
Celebrant: Father Frank J. Coco, a Jesuit retreat master and jazz clarinetist stationed in Louisiana. He was eventually named the official Chaplain of the TJFS.
- 1994 Memorial Coliseum
Celebrant: Bishop James Tamayo, Auxiliary Bishop of Galveston-Houston.⁸⁷ Attendance: 4,500.
- 1995 Memorial Coliseum
Celebrant: Bishop Roberto Gonzalez, newly appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi.⁸⁸ The Coliseum was filled to capacity.
- 1996 Memorial Coliseum
Bishop Roberto Gonzalez returned to celebrate the mass.
- 1997 Cole Park Amphitheater
Celebrant: Father Coco, with Msgr. Higgins, now pastor of Holy Cross Church, con-celebrant
- 1998 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
Celebrant: Father Coco with Msgr. Higgins, pastor of Holy Cross Church, con-celebrant
- 1999 Bayfront Convention Center Plaza
Celebrant: Father Coco with Msgr. Higgins, pastor of Holy Cross Church, con-celebrant. The TJFS did not co-sponsor the Jazz Mass as it had in recent years.⁸⁹
- 2000 Oct. 22, Sunday⁹⁰ 25th anniversary of Jazz Mass⁹¹
Location: Bayfront Plaza Convention Center
Celebrant: Rev. Coco & Monsignor Patrick Higgins
Singers: Jazz Mass Choir, directed by Eddie Olivares; guest director; Johnni Cavazos; assistant director Marsha Hardeman
- 2001 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 2002 Watergarden, Bayfront Plaza
- 2003 Del Mar College, Richardson Auditorium
- 2004 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2005 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2006 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2007 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2008 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2009 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2010 Most Precious Blood Church
- 2011 Oct. 23, Sunday⁹²
Location: Bayfront Plaza Convention Center (?)
Celebrant: Monsignor Roger Smith of St. Patrick Church; Frank Martinez, chaplain, Christus Spohn Health System, guest speaker
Singers: 30-member choir directed by Marsha Hardeman
Musicians: Eddie Olivares, Jr. on tenor sax, Michael K. Perez on piano, E. Olivares on trumpet & thee others on guitar, bass & drums
- 2012 Oct. 21, Sunday⁹³
Location: Most Precious Blood Church
Celebrant: Bishop Wm. Michael Mulvey
Singers: The Holy Cross Choir and Carolyn Blanchard
Musicians: Texas Jazz Festival musicians
- 2013 Oct. 20, Sunday⁹⁴
Location: St. Pius X Church

Notes

- 1 According to the United States Census Bureau, Corpus Christi proper had an estimated population of 316,381 in 2013. Non-Hispanic Whites made up approximately 33.3% of the city's population, while Latinos accounted for nearly 60%, making Corpus Christi one of the largest Hispanic-majority cities in the country. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4817000.html> (accessed on July 22, 2014).
- 2 Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2009), 44; Dave Oliphant, *Texas Jazz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).
- 3 For more on the origins and evolution of Texas-Mexican music, see Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *Tejano Proud* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002) and Manuel H. Peña, *Música Tejana: The Cultural Economy of Artistic Transformation* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999).
- 4 For other examples of how Mexican Americans have helped shape American popular music, see Anthony Macías, *Mexican American Mojo: Popular Music, Dance, and Urban Culture in Los Angeles, 1935-1968* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) and Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
- 5 Skippy Vettters, "Jazz Club Being Organized Here," *The Foghorn* (Del Mar College student newspaper), October 22, 1959, 5.
- 6 "History," 51st Annual Jazz Festival, www.texasjazz-fest.org/texas_jazz_festival/history.html (accessed on December 5, 2011).
- 7 One source notes that Del Mar College had showcased primarily Baroque music prior to this period. See "The Texas Jazz Festival Story," produced by Del Mar College, TCI Cablevision, KEDT-TV, n.d., n.p. Document found in Del Mar Archives. Two-page sheet found in TJF archives. A brief review of *The Foghorn*, also shows that classical music was promoted on campus. Several examples of these concerts are mentioned in *The Foghorn* from the years 1958-1960.
- 8 "Trumpeter still blasts for 50th year," *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* (hereinafter abbreviated as *CCC-T*) October 15, 2010, 1. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&cup_theme=agg (accessed on August 7, 2012).
- 9 The historical record shows two different dates for the first jazz concert at Del Mar College. Some sources note that the initial request for the jazz demonstration was in 1958. See "History of the Texas Jazz Festival," The 34th Annual Jazz Festival, July 29-31, 1994, 6. Other sources state that it took place in November 1959. See "From Jam Session, Mighty Festival Grew," *CCC-T*, October 15, 2010, p. 1. See also "History," 51st Annual Jazz Festival, www.texasjazz-fest.org/texas_jazz_festival/history.html (accessed on December 5, 2011). Interviews with two of the founders, Al "Beto" Garcia and Eddie Olivares, Sr., also clarified this confusion. According to both men, the initial event took place in November of 1959. Al "Beto" Garcia, interview by author, June 19, 2013, and Eddie Olivares, Sr., interview by author, June 19, 2013, both interviews conducted in Corpus Christi, Texas.
- 10 Lisa Hinojosa, "Smooth jazz sounds," *CCC-T*, October 19, 2007. www.caller.com/news/2007/oct/19/smooth-jazz-sounds/?print=1 (accessed on May 5, 2013). See also Texas Jazz Festival, October 11, 2009, 1. www.thecrushgirls.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=367:texas (accessed on August 3, 2010). Garcia, interview by author, June 19, 2013; Olivares, interview by author, June 19, 2013.
- 11 The jazz club apparently had another concert in December, but no information is available on that. See "Jazz Concert Thursday," *The Foghorn*, December 17, 1959, 4; Garcia and Olivares state that the concert was held in February, but the college newspaper indicates it was held in March. See "Jazz Club to Have Concert," *The Foghorn*, February 18, 1960, 4; "Jazz Concert to be Held," *The Foghorn*, March 17, 1960, 4.
- 12 "Jazz Club to Have Concert; "Jazz Concert to be Held."
- 13 Texas Jazz Festival, October 11, 2009, 1. www.thecrushgirls.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=367:texas (accessed on August 3, 2010); Bob Byrne, "Like Cool, Man, the Real Jazz is Coming Up," *CCC-T* June 30, 1963. Article found in Texas Jazz Festival Collection (hereinafter abbreviated as TJF), Metal file Cabinet. Newspaper clippings.
- 14 Deborah K. Mann, "Jazz: The local festival past, present and future," July 12, 1985. TJF Archives. 1985 newspaper clippings Folder.
- 15 "Jazz Concert to be Held"; "1,200 Jazz Fans Hear 3 Groups at Del Mar," *CCC-T*, May 2, 1960, 7B.
- 16 The three groups are mentioned in the following articles: "1,200 Jazz Fans Hear 3 Groups at Del Mar," *CCC-T*, May 2, 1960, 7B and "Contemporary U.S. Music Festival Set for Saturday," *The Foghorn*, April 27, 1960, 4.
- 17 "Music master Galvan dies-Jazz festival co-founder was multifaceted," *CCC-T*, Feb 17, 2011. [www://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg](http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg) (accessed on August 7, 2012).
- 18 Several sources, including Beto Garcia himself in an interview conducted by the author, state that his group was called the Texas Jazz All-Stars. For instance, see Byrne, "Like Cool, Man, the Real Jazz is Coming Up." Despite these claims, one newspaper article noted that, for this particular concert, the name of his group was actually the Gulf Coast All-Stars. See "1,200 Jazz Fans Hear 3 Groups at Del Mar."
- 19 One source reported that the highlight of the evening was the playing of "Why Do I Love You?" by the Galvan Octet. Joe Gallardo, then a student at Del Mar College, did the arrangement. See "1,200 Jazz Fans Hear 3 Groups at Del Mar"; Texas Jazz Festival album, 1969, musical notes on back of album, Del Mar College, TSJ Collection, Metal file cabinet A. (The album says it was Duran.) See also "History," 51st Annual Jazz Festival, October 21-23, 2011. Two sources—History of Texas Jazz Festival, p.1, and 20th annual Texas Jazz Festival, Corpus Christi, July 5-6, 1980, incorrectly state that Ralph Owen, not Ralph Duran, from San Antonio, came to jam.
- 20 The Texas Jazz Festival, www.thecrushgirls.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=367:texas (accessed on August 3, 2010); Byrne, "Like Cool, Man, the Real Jazz is Coming Up."
- 21 The organization was formalized in 1969. It is unclear who was in the organization, other than the jazz members associated with the TJF, such as Beto Garcia, Eddie Olivares, Wanda Gregory, and Jake Trussell. According to the article, the organization, called the [Texas] Jazz Festival Society or TJFS, formed and began to sell memberships in 1969. See "Backers Form Organization," *CCC-T*, March 14, 1969. TJF Archives, 1969 newspaper clippings folder.
- 22 One source says that Wanda Gregory also participated in this decision. "Thursday marks start of annual festival." News Bank, July 23, 1996. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012); another source says that John Nugent recommended the name, South Texas Jazz Festival in 1961. According to this source, the festival was known as the Del Mar College Jazz Festival. "South Texas outdoor Jazz Festival Set for Today," *CCC-T*, July 8, 1962. Newspaper article found in TJF archives under 1962 newspaper clipping folder.
- 23 "South Texas outdoor Jazz Festival Set for Today."
- 24 For additional information on Wanda Gregory, see "Event provides musical tribute to 'Mama Jazz,'" *CCC-T*, December 30, 2005. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012); "Local jazz pioneer Wanda Gregory dies," *CCC-T*, Nov 3, 2005. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012).
- 25 "Thursday marks start of annual festival."
- 26 "South Texas outdoor Jazz Festival Set for Today."
- 27 The concert could not be held at Del Mar College, because the administration complained that fans failed to clean up after the 1960 event and left food and empty bottles in the Richardson Auditorium. "Texas Jazz Festival Story."
- 28 Byrne, "Like Cool, Man, the Real Jazz is Coming Up."
- 29 Ibid.

- 30 Ibid.
- 31 "Texas Jazz Festival Story."
- 32 TJF album, 1969, DMC, TJF collection.
- 33 Karen Brandon, "The jazz festival and the future," September 23, 1984. TJF Archives, 1984 newspaper clippings folder.
- 34 Richard Rodriguez, TJF Planning Co-ordinator, Letter to the National Endowment of the Arts, July 22, 1974, DMC, TJF collection, Application to NEA binder.
- 35 "Corpus Christi's All-Texas Jazz Festival Grows, Grows."
- 36 Dorothy Stanich, "Bands From All Over Coming to Jazz Festival," *CCC-T*, July 11, 1965. TJF Archives, 1965 Newspaper clippings folder.
- 37 Gallardo once noted that Skip Veters was not given credit for helping establish the festival. "Skip never got credit as a founder," he said. (See "Loss of policeman was gain for music," August 15, 1980. TJF Archives, 1980 newspaper clippings folder.) TJFS members did acknowledge the role that others played in the festival. At the 20th annual festival, Wanda Gregory and Julia Garcia (Beto's wife) were inducted as founders. At the 50th annual festival, Eddie Galvan was recognized as a founder. Chester Rupe was referred to as one of the founding members by a reporter when Rupe died. See "Jazz guitarist Chester Rupe dies," July 24, 2001. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012); Beto Garcia stated that all of these individuals and others deserved to be honored as founders because of the important work they did in promoting the TJFS and its activities. Al Beto Garcia, interview by the author, June 19, 2013; likewise, Eddie Olivares stated that, in his view, they were "honorary" founders of the society and festival. He and the other four members were the original founders. Eddie Olivares, interview by the author, June 19, 2013.
- 38 Jose Enriquez, "Texas Jazz Festival legend returns to Corpus Christi," October 13, 2009, www.thedmcfoghorn.com/se/the-foghorn/features/texas-jazz-festival-legend-returns-to-corpus-christi-1.709407#.UaN_K9KG3ms (accessed May 27, 2013). See also Joe Gallardo, *Latino Blue* (notes), www.enjarecords.com/cd.php?nr=ENJ-9421 (accessed on May 27, 2013).
- 39 "Loss of policeman was gain for music."
- 40 "Luis Arcaáz: Biography," <http://www.last.fm/music/Luis+Arcaaz/+wiki> (accessed on June 26, 2013).
- 41 "Loss of policeman was gain for music."
- 42 "Salsa jazz," <http://salsa-jazz.blogspot.com/2011/02/mongo-santamaria-dawn-amanecer.html>
- 43 "Loss of policeman was gain for music."
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Enriquez, "Texas Jazz Festival legend returns to Corpus Christi"; See also Gallardo, *Latino Blue* (notes), www.enjarecords.com/cd.php?nr=ENJ-9421 (accessed on May 27, 2013).
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Al "Beto" Garcia, interview by author, June 19, 2013; Eddie Olivares, Sr., interview by author, June 19, 2013.
- 48 "The Original Founders of the Texas Jazz Festival," in 50th Anniversary of the Texas Jazz Festival, 2011. n.p.
- 49 Al "Beto" Garcia, interview by author, June 19, 2013. Another story of how he switched to the drums exists in a written history of the founders. According to this story, he switched to the drums after his music professor, Tony Ornelas, requested that Garcia play drums in a group that Ornelas had formed. Although Garcia had not been taught the drums, he knew the tune that the band was rehearsing. He recalled that it was "Lemon Drop" by Woody Herman. Garcia apparently had no problem in picking up the beat and thus switching to the drums. "Drummer by happenstance keeps rhythm," *CCC-T*, October 15, 2010, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 7, 2012). See also "The Original Founders of the Texas Jazz Festival," in 50th Anniversary of the Texas Jazz Festival, 2011. n.p.
- 50 Ruiz was born on March 5, 1915, in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico, and died on July 29, 2008. For information on Ruiz, see www.discogs.com/artist/Pablo+Beltran+Ruiz (accessed on August 11, 2010).
- 51 Luis Arcaáz filmography (accessed on August 11, 2010).
- 52 "South Texas Outdoor Jazz Festival Set for Today," *CCC-T*, July 8, 1962. Newspaper article found in TJF archives, 1962 newspaper clippings folder. See also "Corpus Christi's All-Texas Jazz Festival Grows, Grows."
- 53 "The Original Founders of the Texas Jazz Festival." The South Texas Music Walk of Fame is located in the Water Street Market courtyard in downtown Corpus Christi. For a brief article on this event, see "Celebrating music, art, surf," *CCC-T*, June 6, 2008, www.caller.com/news/2008/jun/06/celebrating-music-art-surf/ (accessed on March 27, 2013); "Founder of Texas Jazz Festival Passes," *3KIII TVHD*, <http://www.kiiitv.com/story/24868859/founder-of-texas-jazz-festival-passes> (accessed on March 4, 2014).
- 54 Eddie Olivares, Sr., played his first paying gig when he was just 13 years old and has been performing ever since. Olivares, interview by the author, June 19, 2013.
- 55 "Trumpeter still blasts for 50th year," *CCC-T*, October 15, 2010. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 7, 2012).
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Eddie Olivares, Sr., interview by the author, June 19, 2013.
- 58 "The Original Founders of the Texas Jazz Festival," in 50th Anniversary of the Texas Jazz Festival, 2011. n.p.
- 59 Roy Appleton, "Jazz is where you find it these days," July 3, 1977. Found in TJF archives, 1977 newspaper clippings folder.
- 60 "Jazzman with a 'Halo': A Big Beat in Texas," March 17, 1974, article from unidentified newspaper found in the TJF Archives, 1974 newspaper clippings folder.
- 61 History, www.texasjazz-fest.org/HISTORY.html. Accessed 8/3/2010.
- 62 Texas Jazz Festival, 3-4.
- 63 History, www.texasjazz-fest.org/HISTORY.html. Accessed 8/3/2010.
- 64 Heritage Park: The Cultural Center," www.cctexas.com/?fuseaction=main.view&page=229 (accessed December 7, 2011).
- 65 This estimate of the 1987 festival attendance was provided by Bill Weed, executive director of the TJFS in 1988. See Vincent Rodriguez, Jr., "Texas Jazz Festival to begin Wednesday," *CCC-T*, July 3, 1988, B1.
- 66 Estimate of 2002 festival participants is found in the following: "Jazzed Up-43rd annual Texas Jazz Festival attracts internationally known musicians, local talent," *CCC-T*, October 17, 2003.
- 67 Poncho Hernandez Jr., "Jazz Mass offers spiritual liturgy," *South Texas Catholic* (newspaper of the Diocese of Corpus Christi), Vol. 45, No. 14, October 15, 2010, 1.
- 68 "Jazz Mass adds new tempo to worship," *CCC-T*, Oct 20, 2011, B1.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 "Legend Fr. Clarence Rivers Succumbs," *Black Catholic News*, November 21, 2004, http://www.nbcongress.org/black-catholic-news/2004/fr_clarence_rivers_succumbs.asp (accessed on April 1, 2014). Two local clergymen who were very supportive of the Jazz Mass were Monsignor Robert Freeman and Monsignor Patrick Higgins. Both were pastors of Holy Cross at different points in time.
- 72 Father Clarence Rivers was the first African-American priest ordained in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1956. Rivers, an internationally acclaimed composer, brought his diverse musical tastes to the local congregation's liturgy. For example, he combined Gregorian chant, Negro Spirituals, gospel, and jazz to create a unique form of musical and religious expression. This musical diversity is reflected in his album *American Mass Program*. This 1964 album sold more than 30,000 copies and helped spark a revolution in American Catholic Church music. Rivers's versions of Gregorian chant and spirituals also were recorded by Erich Kunzel and members of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra the

- following year in an album *The Brotherhood of Man*, which was based on a jazz mass. "Freeing the Spirit-Father Clarence Joseph Rivers, Jr.," in www.freewebs.com/mrivers/biography.htm (accessed on August 9, 2010).
- 73 Eddie Olivares, Sr., interview by author, June 19, 2013. Olivares and his wife, Emily, also wrote a brief history of the mass. See Eddie Olivares, Sr. and Emily Olivares, "The History of the Jazz Mass," undated document, which is in the possession of the author.
 - 74 From the beginning of the Jazz Mass, Marsha Hardeman assisted in organizing the choir. In the early twenty-first century, she took on a more prominent role in the selection and direction of music.
 - 75 Hernandez, "Jazz Mass offers spiritual liturgy."
 - 76 This performance was held at Holy Cross Church on Easter Sunday, 1975. Pastor Thomas Meaney was the celebrant. Olivares and Olivares, "History of the Jazz Mass."
 - 77 At least 19 individuals sang in the choir, including Ray Armstead, Sam Barrientes, Peggy Brasfield, Wanda Gregory, Marsha Hardeman, Corinne Leiser, Karen Lewis, Susie McCoy, John Medina, Emilie Olivares, Mary Helen Rodriguez, Bob Rubarth, Clara Jane Rubarth, Ray Stearns, Ramiro Trevino, Alice Vargas, Barbara Williams, Floyd Williams, and Gloria Lewandowski. See *The Corpus Christi Museum Presents on Its Front Porch*, February 21, 1976, three-page leaflet in TJJ Archives, 1976 newspaper clippings folder; Olivares and Olivares, "History of the Jazz Mass," 1.
 - 78 Knutsen, "Swingin' Mass at museum."
 - 79 Olivares and Olivares, "History of the Jazz Mass."
 - 80 Ibid.
 - 81 Her album *Music for Peace* was choreographed and performed by the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. It would be renamed "Mary Lou's Mass." For additional information on Mary Lou Williams, see Tammy L. Kernodle, *Soul on Soul: The Life and Music of Mary Lou Williams* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004) and Linda Dahl, *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1999).
 - 82 Florence Pleasant was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, on July 22, 1933. Her father owned a dance hall, and her mother was a singer. Pleasant played piano and violin through high school. She gave up her scholarship to Xavier College in New Orleans after two years because of a strong desire to play bebop music. Pleasant played with Arnett Cobb and His Mob in San Antonio and joined him later in Chicago for two or three years of playing theater circuits, which culminated in appearances at Harlem's Apollo Theater and the Birdland Ballroom in New York City. After teaching herself to play the organ, Pleasant embarked upon her own solo career. She left New York City in 1978 due to a relative's illness, but thereafter performed on the West Coast. See Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Florence "Bu" Pleasant manuscript collection, MSS 336.
 - 83 Olivares and Olivares, "History of the Jazz Mass."
 - 84 "A Different Perspective on the Jazz Festival," *Coastal Review*, March 1994. TJJ archives. Newspaper clippings in 1994 folder.
 - 85 Olivares and Olivares, "History of the Jazz Mass."
 - 86 Not only did Tejanos influence jazz in particular, but their experiences with this style carried over to música Tejana. One of the best examples of the blending of other musical influences with Mexican-American music is the work of two Texas bands, Little Joe y La Familia and Tortilla Factory. Both of these groups embrace elements of jazz, blues, and rhythm and blues and incorporate them into música Tejana. In the process, they helped create a new genre of music known as "Tejano," which became very popular throughout the Spanish-speaking world during the 1980s and 1990s. Perhaps the best early example of what Anthony Macias calls this "hybrid sensibility" is a song by Little Joe y La Familia known as "Las Nubes," which is a soaring, jazz-inspired tune that became the unofficial anthem of the Chicano movement during the 1970s.
 - 87 Bishop Tamayo is a Corpus Christi native and a graduate of Foy H. Moody High School. He later became first bishop of the Diocese of Laredo.
 - 88 Bishop Roberto Gonzalez, newly appointed bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi and successor to Bishop Rene Garcia, celebrated the mass.
 - 89 The Society was experiencing financial difficulties and the board members were adamant about having the mass on the site of the Jazz Festival, a stage at Heritage Park, instead of Bayfront Plaza. The latter was Msgr. Higgins's requirement for the mass.
 - 90 "Holy Cross Sponsoring a Non-denominational Jazz Mass Sunday," *CCC-T* October 21, 2000. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012).
 - 91 Holy Cross was again the sole sponsor of the mass.
 - 92 "Jazz Mass adds new tempo to worship," *CCC-T* October 20, 2011. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=NewsBank&p_theme=agg (accessed on August 6, 2012).
 - 93 "Texas Jazz Festival 2012 Mass," *South Texas Catholic*, www.southtexascatholic.com/index.cfm?load=photoalbum&album=129 (accessed on June 1, 2013).
 - 94 "2013 Annual Jazz Mass," *South Texas Catholic*. <http://www.southtexascatholic.com/?event=813&load=event>

A black and white photograph of four young men standing outdoors. They are all wearing suits and bow ties. The man in the center is wearing a dark double-breasted suit and a bow tie, and has his arm around the shoulder of the man to his right. The man to his left is wearing a light-colored suit and a bow tie. The man on the far left is wearing a dark suit and a bow tie. The man on the far right is wearing a dark suit and a bow tie. They are standing in front of a wooden building with a shingled roof. There are trees in the background.

The Lubbock Texas Quartet and Odis "Pop" Echols:

Promoting Southern Gospel Music on the High Plains of Texas

Curtis L. Peoples



Diverse forms of religious music have always been important to the cultural fabric of the Lone Star State. In both black and white communities, gospel music has been an influential genre in which many musicians received some of their earliest musical training. Likewise, many Texans have played a significant role in shaping the national and international gospel music scenes.

Despite the importance of gospel music in Texas, little scholarly attention has been devoted to this popular genre. Through the years, gospel has seen stylistic changes and the development of subgenres. This article focuses on the subgenre of Southern gospel music, also commonly known as quartet music. While it is primarily an Anglo style of music, Southern gospel influences are multicultural. Southern gospel is performed over a wide geographic area, especially in the American South and Southwest, although this study looks specifically at developments in Northwest Texas during the early twentieth century.

Organized efforts to promote Southern gospel began in 1910 when James D. Vaughn established a traveling quartet to help sell his songbooks.¹ The songbooks were written with shape-notes, part of a religious singing method based on symbols rather than traditional musical notation. In addition to performing, gospel quartets often taught music in peripatetic singing schools using the shape-note method.

The roots of shape-note singing lie in English country parish singing, which began to take hold in America with the publication of James Lyon's *Urania* in 1764 and William Billings's *The New England Psalm Singer* in 1770. However, the first shape-note book, *The Easy Instructor* by William Smith and William Little, appeared in 1801. In 1844, the Sacred Harp singing tradition began with the publishing of Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King's *The Sacred Harp*.² The Sacred Harp tradition, also commonly known as Fasola, is still popular in America, and many events and conventions take place throughout the country each year. The advantage to shape-notes is that they help singers easily find song pitches without using the more complex key signature method. The shape-note system is commonly based on two structures—four notes or seven notes—and Southern gospel quartets utilize the seven-note system.³

▲	●	◆	▼	●	▼	■
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	So	La	Ti

Figure 1. Seven Shape-Notes Symbols

The shape-note instruction method helped promote white Southern gospel, increased book sales, and boosted concert attendance in rural areas. As the popularity of shape-note singing grew, such publishers as the Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company followed in Vaughn's footsteps to satisfy the demand for songbooks. In its heyday during the 1930s and 1940s, Stamps-Baxter, whose main offices were in Dallas, became one of the largest gospel music publishers in the world and sponsored numerous quartets, including the Lubbock Texas Quartet, a group that achieved substantive regional success in an area stretching from eastern New Mexico to western Arkansas. In addition, the group attained a degree of national recognition with the second-best-selling record for Columbia's Hillbilly Series in 1930: Side A featured "Turn Away"; Side B, "O Mother How We Miss You." Evidence

been obscure at best. This obscurity may be due to the fact that gospel and popular secular music were not as categorical in the early twentieth century as they are today. However, popular secular music often overshadows its counterpart from that era. Many members of Lubbock-area gospel quartets traveled extensively throughout West Texas, teaching both secular and religious music to countless people and helping launch numerous musical careers. For example, Pop Echols was instrumental in developing the performing career of Charlene Condray Hancock, Tommy Hancock's wife and member of several groups, including the Roadside Playboys, The Supernatural Family Band, and the Texana Dames. Until recently, only people closely associated with the Lubbock Texas Quartet knew the identities of the men who performed in the group or that it recorded for Columbia Records. Although

The shape-note instruction method helped promote white Southern gospel, increased book sales, and boosted concert attendance in rural areas.

26 suggests that this was the first recording for a major label by a Lubbock-based group and may have been the first recording of any Lubbock musicians.⁴

The record was made possible by the group's connection with people such as Odis "Pop" Echols. Echols was a member of the original Stamps Quartet. The original Stamps Quartet recorded "Give the World a Smile," most likely the first gospel record to achieve "gold" status (meaning that it sold at least 500,000 copies), which was recorded under the supervision of famous producer Ralph Peer. Many people are familiar with the quartet that became known as J.D. Sumner and the Stamps, which sang with Elvis Presley in the 1970s. Echols was also part of the live music show *The Red River Valley Roundup* in Shreveport, Louisiana, that was a precursor to *The Louisiana Hayride*. He often shared the bill with such stars as Pee Wee King and Eddy Arnold, and he also performed for dignitaries such as Lyndon B. Johnson. Echols later promoted Charlie Phillips and received writing credit for the hit song "Sugartime," which was first recorded at Norman Petty Studios with Buddy Holly playing guitar. The McGuire Sisters' version of "Sugartime" earned a gold record designation in 1958. Echols was very well connected in the music business and very adept at organizing talent.

The story of the Lubbock Texas Quartet, Odis "Pop" Echols, and the early proliferation of gospel music in West Texas has

the Lubbock Texas Quartet and Pop Echols's "afterbeats" or "backfire" rhythmic counterpoint style of gospel music waned in popularity over the years, they remain an important part of the musical fabric of West Texas. The main purpose of this article is to shed light on the Lubbock Texas Quartet, Odis "Pop" Echols, and their important role in the musical history of the Lone Star State.

From the late 1920s until the early 1940s, the quartet included a variety of members and performed under several different names, including the Lubbock Quartet, the Lubbock Stamps Quartet, and the Lubbock County Quartet. Many of the members of the Lubbock and Lubbock Stamps Quartets are known, and it is evident that some of them performed on the aforementioned Columbia record. Despite their initial success with Columbia, the quartet never released additional recordings under any variation of the name.

Nonetheless, the popularity of gospel music on the High Plains had taken root even earlier. During the 1910s and 1920s several vocal groups became popular in Lubbock, and some members of the Lubbock Texas Quartet performed with these groups, or on programs with them. Some of the early quartets had formal names for their groups, while others did not. The most popular groups from 1919 to 1927 seem to have had one thing in common: the music and business acumen of Tony Q. Dyess. Through his associations with

gospel music publishers, Dyess helped lay the foundation for the creation of groups such as the Lubbock Texas Quartet.

Born December 15, 1881, seven miles east of Bryan, Texas, in Brazos County,⁵ Tony Dyess lived in Vernon, Texas, for 10 years before traveling to Lubbock in the fall of 1919 to visit for a few weeks.⁶ Dyess quickly began to make his musical imprint on the area. On October 25, Dyess was an honored guest with I.F. and R.A. Holland and Luther Meredith at a recital in Shallowater, where they sang and "enjoyed a very enthusiastic encore."⁷ The following day the quartet attended a "singing" in Lorenzo.⁸ Not long afterward, Dyess, his wife Mary Matilda Dyess, and their three children Nelle, Rueben (Tony), and Raymond (Doc) moved to Lubbock.⁹

Dyess soon gained respect as an accomplished singer.¹⁰ He performed in Lubbock and the surrounding area, singing

Dyess performed with many vocal groups, but he most often sang with R.I. (Ira) Wilson, R.A. Holland, and L.L. (Lee) Wendell. Because of their popularity, they performed together often, though group names differed. On many occasions, the quartet appeared only by the men's names: Dyess, Holland, Wendell, and Wilson. They also used the name Home Brew Quartet, but occasionally performed as the Lubbock Peerless Quartet and once as the Lubbock Quartet. The men used the name Lubbock Peerless Quartet when they performed for a managers' meeting of the West Texas Baseball League, for the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce annual banquet in 1922, and at a promotional concert for the construction of the Lubbock Community Auditorium.¹⁹ The group first used the name the Lubbock Quartet in 1924, when it traveled with a booster group to various towns throughout West Texas to

Through his associations with gospel music publishers, Dyess helped lay the foundation for the creation of groups such as the Lubbock Texas Quartet.

both religious and popular music.¹¹ Often playing his guitar, he entertained crowds with comical songs, such as "Putting on Airs" and "Come after Breakfast Bring a Lunch and Leave before Suppertime."¹² Dyess became the leader of the old Cumberland Presbyterian Church Choir and assisted the First Baptist Church Choir.¹³ In 1921 he was elected president of the Lubbock County Singing Conventions, which were held every fifth Sunday at various venues.¹⁴ Dyess taught impromptu singing schools in churches and county courthouses throughout the area, often paid by the proceeds from box suppers.¹⁵ In 1923, he arranged a well-received singing contest involving local singing schools for the South Plains Fair.¹⁶

As a musical entrepreneur, Tony Dyess was one of the earliest to sell shape-note gospel singing books in Lubbock. He purchased two classified ads in the local newspaper to promote the songbooks. One ad stated that James D. Vaughn published the books. In the other ad, which does not list a publisher, Dyess promoted his latest songbook, *Evangel Light*, at 30¢ per copy or \$3.40 per dozen prepaid, for both individuals and singing classes.¹⁷ The ad that included a publisher—the one for James D. Vaughn's 1922 songbook—listed it for sale at 35¢ per copy or \$3.50 per dozen.¹⁸ How Dyess became associated with Vaughn Publishing is unknown, but the relationship was important for the development of gospel quartets in the region.

promote the fair in Lubbock. In 1924, the Lubbock Band also accompanied the delegation and both the Lubbock Quartet and band received praise for their musical abilities. The music helped draw in large crowds to promote the fair.²⁰

The first known published reference to the Home Brew Quartet is in a Lubbock newspaper article on May 12, 1922, which describes the quartet as "very popular" after its performance at the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet on May 9, 1922.²¹ The quartet leader appears to be Tony Dyess; he authorized an announcement for the Home Brew Quartet's performance at Woodrow, Texas, to raise money for the Lubbock Community Auditorium.²²

The Home Brew Quartet performed often for Lubbock Rotary Club meetings, where the group received high praise for its renditions of songs such as the African-American spiritual "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Praying way Down Yonder By Myself."²³ The group headlined the 1922 Fourth of July program in Lubbock's Community Auditorium, a program that featured some other performers who later joined the Lubbock Texas Quartet. Future members of the Lubbock Texas Quartet performing on the program were Louis M. (L.M.) Brooks, who sang a bass solo, and Clyde R. Burleson, who sang an alto solo. Both men also took part in a trio with Mrs. L.M. Brooks.²⁴ L.M. Brooks headed a "home brew quartet" for the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce's Sixth



Lubbock Texas Quartet Columbia Record Label. "O Mother How We Miss You." Courtesy of Crossroads of Music Archive, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, Echols Family Collection, AV006.

Annual Peddlers Jubilee on June 27, 1927, but it is unclear if Brooks filled in for Dyess, who may have been ill at that time and would be dead within two months.²⁵ The Sixth Annual Peddlers Jubilee is the last reference to a Home Brew Quartet consisting of Dyess, Holland, Wendell, Wilson, or Brooks.

L.M. Brooks's tenure and extent of involvement with the Home Brew Quartet is not known, since very little biographical information about him exists. However, his name appears often in listings of performers at various functions in Lubbock. For instance, he performed at the Baptist Church on April 12, 1924. The program lists a quartet comprised of "Windell, Holland Gunn, and Brooks."²⁶ The Gunn listed is Professor Glenn A. Gunn (G.A.) who participated in many singing groups and later led an incarnation of the Lubbock Quartet along with L. M Brooks.²⁷

On January 15, 1924, G.A. Gunn sang with L.M. Brooks, a man with the last name Hilton, and Clyde Burleson at a special evening program for the opening of the new Baptist Church.²⁸ G.A. Gunn, Clyde Burleson, L.M. Brooks, and L.L. Wendell were guest performers at the First Christian Sacred Concert on October 11, 1925.²⁹ The four men (and others mentioned) often sang together at various times and for varying functions. On January 22, 1929, the name Lubbock Quartet reappeared in print in a brief announcement stating that "singing by the

'Stamps Male quartet' and the 'Lubbock quartet' featured the regular community singing program at the Southwest ward on Sunday night."³⁰ According to the concert program, The Lubbock Quartet consisted of G.A. Gunn, leader; Cecil Lee Gunn, tenor; Minnis Monroe Meek, baritone; and L.M. Brooks, bass.³¹ The relationship between the Stamps Quartet and the Stamps-Baxter Music Company is important because it provides insight into who may have performed on the Lubbock Texas Quartet Columbia record, the reason the group recorded, and the overall popularity of the group.

The Lubbock Texas Quartet enjoyed national success from 1929 to 1943, especially following the 1930 release of the group's Columbia Records 78-rpm record, which featured the sides "Turn Away" and "O Mother How We Miss You."³² The record is almost certainly the earliest recording of a Lubbock musical group. Columbia released the record on February 28, 1930, through its 15000-D series, which focused on traditional folk music, more commonly called "Hillbilly" music.³³ In 1924, Columbia Records published a booklet "Familiar Tunes on Fiddle, Guitar, Banjo, Harmonica, and Accordion" that featured Hillbilly artists. It was the first national publication to accumulate music of the budding Hillbilly record industry. By January 1925, Columbia Records had amassed enough traditional folk material to begin its 15000-D series: "Familiar Tunes-Old and New." The series paralleled Columbia's 14000-D (race) series, recordings specifically intended for an African-American audience. The 15000-D series was one of Columbia's most successful series and its design and marketing focused primarily on a white, Southern audience. Columbia released almost all of its country and gospel music recordings on the 15000-D series. Other record companies followed Columbia's lead and soon established their own Hillbilly music series.³⁴

At first, a large portion of the country music recordings took place at Columbia's studios in New York, but a substantial number came from field sessions in the South. Most of the field sessions took place in Atlanta, Georgia, but other sessions occurred periodically in Memphis and Johnson City, Tennessee; Dallas, Texas; and New Orleans, Louisiana. The last 15000-D series record, released in 1933, was Bob Ferguson's "Crash of the Akron," 15782-D matrix number (MX W152386).³⁵

The Lubbock Texas Quartet's Columbia record comprises two songs arranged as four-part vocal harmonies and a guitar accompaniment. The two songs on the record are Side A: "Turn Away" (MX W149554) and Side B: "O Mother How We Miss You" (MX W149555). Columbia Records assigned the label number 15510-D to the Lubbock Texas Quartet's record. The quartet recorded both songs in Dallas

on December 6, 1929. In all, Columbia released five records from the Dallas sessions. The Lubbock Texas Quartet gospel recordings were the only ones recorded on December 6. The other gospel recordings took place on December 4, 1929: 15502-D Stamps Quartet "I Worship the Lord" (MX W149522) and "I Want to Do My Best" (MX W149524); 15560-D Owens Brothers and Ellis "He's Calling You" (MX W149529) and "You Shall Reap What You Sow" (MX W149528); 15574-D Corley Family "Give the World a Smile" (MX W149521) and "The Way to Gloryland" (MX W149520); 15495-D Corley Family "When Jesus Comes" (MX W149519) and "He Keeps My Soul" (MX W149518); 15655-D Owens Brothers and Ellis "He's Calling All" (MX W149525) and "I am Overshadowed by Love" (MX W149523).³⁶

OKeh Records, a subsidiary of Columbia Records, also released several recordings conducted in Dallas from November 27 to 29, 1929. By 1929, most of Columbia and OKeh recording sessions happened simultaneously, but little information is available about the Columbia and OKeh

His younger brother, Walter Elmore, was also an accomplished songwriter, singer, and music instructor. Reverend B.B. Edmiaston was born on July 16, 1881, to David Wilson and Georgia Ann Fluty Edmiaston in Baxter County, Arkansas. He attended public schools in both Arkansas and Texas and took some college and university level correspondence courses. He attended branch sessions at "S.N.M.I." and regular sessions at the Southern Development Normal School of Music.⁴¹ He studied music under Rufus Turner, F.L. Eiland, W.H. Lawson, Berry McGee, Emmett S. Dean, G.W. Fields, Dr. J.B. Herbert, and many others.⁴² Reverend Edmiaston started singing and directing music publicly in 1897. In 1905, he married Ella Allen, who also wrote songs, and they had one son named Don Bates Edmiaston. For most of his life, Reverend Edmiaston was a Methodist. In the 1910s and 1920s, he wrote and published songs through the Trio Music Company of Waco, located at 113 South Fourth Street. He served as editor of "The Musical Trio," a publication of the Trio Music Company, and also as director of the Southern Development

The Stamps-Baxter Music Company established copyright for the song "Turn Away" in 1929.

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November and December 1929 recording sessions. The OKeh releases, both religious and secular are: Stamps-Baxter School of Music "I'll be Singing Forever" (MX 403387) and "I am O'ershadowed by Love" (MX 403386); Oscar and Doc Harper "Beaumont Rag" (MX 403348), "Billy on the Low Ground" (MX 403349), "Terrell Texas Blues" (MX 403346), and "Dallas Blues" (MX 403344); Harmony Four "He's a Wonderful Savior to Me" (MX 403373), "I'm Sailing On" (MX 403372), "My Friend Devine" (MX 403370), and "I'll Know Him" (MX403371).³⁷ Marion Snider, the last surviving member of the Lubbock Texas Quartet, said that he remembered recording at Seller's Company Recording Studio in Dallas during the 1930s, but he did not know where the 1929 Lubbock Texas Quartet recording sessions took place.³⁸

The lyricist and composer of the Lubbock Texas Quartet song "Turn Away," is Reverend Bernard Bates (B.B.) Edmiaston.³⁹ The Stamps-Baxter Music Company established copyright for the song "Turn Away" in 1929. Reverend Edmiaston, a prolific composer and poet, wrote thousands of songs during his lifetime. Most of these were sacred songs, but he also wrote love, glee, and comical numbers. He wrote or co-wrote at least 829 songs for Stamps-Baxter Publishing.⁴⁰

Normal School of Music in Waco. Reverend Edmiaston moved to West Texas in the late 1920s.⁴³ From 1929 to 1931, he resided in Coke County and became the minister of the First United Methodist Church in Robert Lee.⁴⁴ Around 1937 he lived in Strawn, and from 1954 to 1964, he lived in Bronte, also in Coke County. His wife Ella died there in 1955 after a two-year battle with lymphatic leukemia. Reverend Edmiaston, who died on December 2, 1964, at the age of 84 from massive smoke inhalation suffered during a house fire, is buried in Bronte's Fairview Cemetery.

The song "Turn Away" appears on two compilation gospel albums released in 2005.⁴⁵ It is interesting that "Turn Away" is the song that appears on the compilation albums because evidence suggests that "O Mother How We Miss You" was the more popular radio request in the 1930s and 1940s.

The transcription for "O Mother How We Miss You" appears in several songbooks, including *Lonnie and Thelma's Book of Beloved Hymns*. Lonnie and Thelma Robertson were well-known gospel radio singers from the Gainesville, Missouri, area. Lonnie and Thelma published the book "with four-part harmony arrangements...at the request of many radio listeners."⁴⁶ The song also appears in the Stamps-Baxter

songbooks *Special Service Songs for Special Occasions* and *Virgil O. Stamp's Favorite Radio Songs*. In Lonnie and Thelma's publication, the song is attributed to E.M. Kitchen as the "owner." It is unclear whether Kitchen helped compose the song, or if he may have only owned the copyright. In the Stamps-Baxter publications, a well-known gospel songwriter W.A. McKinney shares credit with Kitchen.⁴⁷ In *Special Service Songs for Special Occasions*, the Stamps-Baxter Music Company is noted as the owner of the song, which is dedicated to Mrs. Roy Post of Tupelo, Mississippi.⁴⁸

William Alfred McKinney, born in Plantersville, Mississippi, in 1894, worked as a rural mail carrier. He studied harmony and composition, but did not teach music. Before 1937, he had written about 100 songs. His last known songbook *The Solid Rock for Radio, Conventions, Singing Schools and Wherever Special Gospel Songs are Needed* was copyrighted in 1944. His last known residence was Shannon, Mississippi.⁴⁹ Both

Some information about members of the Lubbock Texas Quartet is available through newspapers and oral history accounts. It is possible that others may have performed with the quartet in its various incarnations, but the following is a list of known members who sang with the quartet from 1929 through 1943: Louis M. Brooks (bass), Clyde Rufus Burleson (tenor), Wilson Loyd Carson (baritone and guitar), Rueben (Tony) Dyess (bass), Raymond (Doc) Dyess, Homer Garrison (lead), Glenn A. Gunn (lead), Cecil Gunn (tenor), Minnis M. Meeks (baritone), and Marion Snider (piano).⁵²

Because all of the members of the 1929 Lubbock Texas Quartet are dead, and little information exists about the record, it is not known who all appeared on the Columbia record. Although the Columbia recording lists the Lubbock Texas Quartet as the "performer," the label also mentions "guitar accompaniment," which may suggest participation by a fifth member, although it was not unusual for a gospel quartet

The Lubbock Texas Quartet—also known as the Lubbock Quartet or Lubbock Stamps Quartet—enjoyed about 10 years of success with the Stamps-Baxter Publishing and Printing Company.

Plantersville and Shannon are within a 20- to 30-minute drive of Tupelo, and thus it is possible McKinney knew Mrs. Roy Post, resulting in the dedication of the song.

At the time of the Lubbock Texas Quartet's record release, the United States had slipped into the Great Depression of the 1930s, and record sales began to decline. In 1930, for Columbia Records' Hillbilly series it was fortunate if a record sold three or four thousand copies. However, two records did sell in the five figures. The top-selling album was 15572-D, Tom Darby and Jimmie Tarlton's "My Little Blue Heaven" (MX W150268) and "On the Banks of the Lonely River" (MX W150264), which sold over 17,000 copies. The second-best-selling album of the year was the Lubbock Texas Quartet record, which sold 12,776 copies—quite a significant amount considering its late release in the series.⁵⁰

Only a few extant newspaper advertisements list the Lubbock Texas Quartet's record for sale. Five separate advertisements appear from record stores in Charleston, Spencer, and Walton, West Virginia, with the earliest on July 30, 1930.⁵¹ Two separate advertisements are for Galperin's music house in Charleston and the other two are separate advertisements with record listings by William G. McCulty in Spencer and George W. Looney in Walton.

to employ an instrumentalist to accompany the four main singers, especially during a studio recording.⁵³ However, the accounts of the group's performances always list four members. Evidence suggests that Burleson, Meek, and Carson were most likely on the record and that either Louis Brooks and/or Cecil Gunn also appeared.

Clyde Burleson was born in Lavaca County, Texas, on June 13, 1885. He was a fixture in various Lubbock quartets through the 1920s and 1930s and held several offices within singing conventions in the West Texas region.⁵⁴ Homer Garrison said that Burleson had immense talent as a singer, entertainer, music educator, and overall leader. Burleson, according to Marion Snider and Homer Garrison, sang high-pitched first tenor parts.⁵⁵ Burleson lived in Lubbock from sometime in the 1920s until 1943 when he moved to California, although he returned to Lubbock occasionally to perform.⁵⁶ He died in Lynwood, California, on January 9, 1967.⁵⁷

Minnis Monroe Meek was born in Whitesburg, Tennessee, on December 31, 1904. In 1920, he lived in Farmersville, Texas, with his parents and siblings.⁵⁸ He moved to Lubbock in 1928 and began performing with the Lubbock Texas Quartet about January 22, 1929.⁵⁹ According to Homer Garrison, at first Meek was the only one in the group who

could write music. During the 1930s, Meek joined the Harley Sadler shows and toured with the company. In addition to entertainment, Meek also worked as a representative of the Atlas Life Insurance Company. Meek died of a heart attack on December 22, 1949.⁶⁰

Wilson Lloyd (W.L.) Carson was born September 6, 1911 or 1912, in Lubbock.⁶¹ Carson's family originally worked as farmers in the Gomez and Tokio area west of Brownfield, but his mother moved the family to Lubbock after his father died. W.L. Carson attended three years of high school before joining the U.S. Army Air Corps; he served from 1942 until World War II ended in 1945.⁶² As an entrepreneur, he owned part of The Carson Brothers Motor Company, along with his brother Ellison Cluff and another partner. The business closed sometime in the 1950s. He also ran a grill in Rotan for a while. Besides playing with the Lubbock Texas Quartet, Carson also performed with the Drugstore Cowboys, although arthritis

up in West Texas and lived in various rural areas. He said that, while growing up, music was not part of the curriculum in most rural schools, but occasional singing schools were offered. He attended his first singing school while in the third or fourth grade. It was not until his family moved to Liberty, Texas, near Idalou, that he began to receive significant singing instruction. He attended the Liberty Singing School under the direction of "Professor of Music" S.V. Summers and his assistant, Uncle Tom Nelson. In 1932, Garrison began taking classes at Lubbock High School to become qualified for college. Upon Garrison's graduation that same year, Professor Summers insisted that he attend the Stamps-Baxter Normal Music School. Therefore, at age 18, Homer Garrison left his home for the first time and attended the school in Dallas. Garrison said Virgil Stamps led the school, and after six weeks of training, the young Lubbockite returned home and continued to learn from Odis "Pop" Echols. Virgil Stamps

The bulk of the money the quartet made came from teaching singing schools and selling songbooks.

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eventually rendered him unable to play guitar and limited him to performing on piano. Carson died on August 12, 1992, in Lubbock.⁶³

Little information exists about the last two members who may have performed on the record, Cecil Gunn and Louis Brooks. Although it is difficult to determine with absolute certainty, the version of The Lubbock Texas Quartet that recorded for Columbia Records most likely included Clyde Burleson, Minnis Meek, Wilson Carson, Cecil Gunn, and/or Louis Brooks.⁶⁴

The Lubbock Texas Quartet—also known as the Lubbock Quartet or Lubbock Stamps Quartet—enjoyed about 10 years of success with the Stamps-Baxter Publishing and Printing Company. During the 1930s, the quartet regularly sang live on KFYO and other radio stations. The group traveled throughout Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Louisiana performing and teaching seven shape-note gospel music. The Great Depression took its toll on many, but members of the Lubbock Texas Quartet appear to have done well for themselves.

Homer Garrison made about \$18 per week working for Clyde Burleson and singing on the road, which was good money during the depths of the Depression.⁶⁵ Garrison sang with the Lubbock Texas Quartet from 1933 to 1936. He grew

invited Garrison to join a Stamps quartet. Garrison sang for a month with Burleson, Meeks, and Carson, but stopped to attend classes at Texas Technological College. While attending Texas Tech, Garrison married, and when his wife became pregnant, he left school to join the Lubbock Texas Quartet.

The Lubbock Texas Quartet earned a modest living performing live shows and teaching music. The quartet's primary territory stretched from Wichita Falls north into Altus and Ardmore, Oklahoma, and west from there into eastern New Mexico. Homer Garrison said that in 1934 Clyde Burleson bought a V-8 Ford to transport the group on its tour. The monthly car payment was \$26, which the entire quartet helped pay, along with other expenses.⁶⁶ While on tour, the quartet often stopped at local schools and gave free performances to promote nearby concerts. Admission to a concert ranged from 25¢ to 50¢.⁶⁷ At a concert, one might hear the quartet singing such vocal selections as "Put on Your Old Grey Bonnet," "The Dying Cowboy," "I Know the Lord Laid His Hands on Me," and "The Woman in the Shoe."⁶⁸

The bulk of the money the quartet made came from teaching singing schools and selling songbooks. The price of a two-week singing school was around \$75. The quartet usually taught two singing schools at once. For example, a couple of the members might teach in one location, such as Tulia, Texas,

while the others taught in nearby Lockney.⁶⁹ At a two-week singing school, students learned basic music theory and shape-note singing. The singing schools brought music to rural communities and helped develop local music leaders to lead choirs. After about a year, the group returned to a community and taught advanced courses.⁷⁰ The quartet taught year round, but the summer months proved better because children were out of school, and crops were still in the fields.⁷¹

The Lubbock Texas Quartet represented the Stamps-Baxter Publishing and Printing Company. In return, Stamps-Baxter supplied the quartet with songbooks and money. The group sold the songbooks for 25¢. The quartet paid Stamps-Baxter 12.5¢ per copy and received some free copies from the company. Profits from the songbooks helped to defray travel expenses.⁷² When the quartet could not find work, Stamps-Baxter often helped. For instance, the group once was stuck in an Oklahoma hotel room for three weeks with no business because of constant rain. Although Clyde Burleson had \$20 stashed in

was often intense. In order to boost their volume and provide a “fuller” sound, quartets performing at singing conventions often hired piano players for accompaniment, since piano was much easier to hear than unamplified fiddle or guitar.

From its inception, the Lubbock Texas Quartet normally used only a guitar for instrumental accompaniment. Then, about five or six months after Homer Garrison joined, the members were in McKinney, Texas, where they met Marion Snider and recruited him into the group. At the time, the group consisted of Clyde Burleson, Minnis Meek, Wilson Carson, and Homer Garrison. Carson had been playing guitar and singing, but the group needed a piano player to enhance its performances.

Marion Snider had played music for much of his life before joining the quartet. Snider was still a young man when, at the urging of his father, he enrolled at the Stamps-Baxter mid-winter normal school in Dallas for musical training, thereby launching his long and successful career in gospel music. He

The singing schools brought music to rural communities and helped develop local music leaders to lead choirs.

his shoe, it was not enough to cover the quartet’s expenses. So, Virgil Stamps wired the group an additional \$50 to help.⁷³

In addition to teaching and performing regularly at concerts, the Lubbock Texas Quartet participated in singing conventions. Singing conventions varied in size, location, and duration. Local churches often hosted the small to mid-level “singings,” while larger conventions typically took place in auditoriums. In the Lubbock area, local “singings” happened at places such as Slaton, Idalou, Liberty, and Shallowater. Crowds varied in size from 200 to 400 in Lubbock and 40 to 50 people in outlying rural areas. In some cases, as many as half of those in attendance were singers.⁷⁴ Sometimes multiple counties held singing conventions, and some of them even crossed state boundaries. This was the case with the Plateau Singing Convention, which included parts of West Texas and eastern New Mexico. At the larger conventions, crowds ranged anywhere from several hundred to several thousand people, and as many as six to eight quartets might appear to sing, promote themselves, and sell songbooks. At one such gathering in Altus, Oklahoma, Odis Echols’s Melody Boys, the Stamps Quartet of Dallas, Lubbock Stamps Quartet, and A.J. Showalter of Tennessee performed and promoted their respective companies. Competition between rival quartets

performed with the Lubbock quartet and lived in Lubbock for two years. While attending Texas Tech in 1935, Snider received a telegram from Virgil Stamps, who requested that Snider come to Dallas and join the Stamps Quartet.⁷⁵ Snider accepted the offer, even though it meant the end of his tenure with the Lubbock Texas Quartet. Throughout the years, Snider remained in contact with many members of the Lubbock Texas Quartet and saw them often at performances and singing conventions. As it turned out, Marion Snider would be the last surviving member of the Lubbock Texas Quartet.

As early as 1921, professional gospel entertainers and entrepreneurs were working throughout the Lubbock area. The first known group was the Vaughn Quartet of Jacksonville, Texas, which performed just east of Lubbock in the small town of Idalou.⁷⁶ The quartet returned to the Lubbock area in the spring of 1922, under the leadership of Virgil Stamps, and performed for an enthusiastic audience of about 425 people at a singing convention in nearby Slaton.⁷⁷ By the summer of 1922, Lubbock had its very own Vaughn quartet, represented by Clyde Burleson, L.M. Brooks, C.W. Beene, and Mr. and Mrs. Ira Wilson. Together, they traveled to Clovis, New Mexico, to attend the Plateau Singing Convention, which was the largest singing convention of

its kind in the United States, attracting members from 40 counties across Texas and New Mexico.⁷⁸

By the fall of that year, the Lubbock Vaughn Quartet had become a local crowd favorite. In September 1922, the *Lubbock Avalanche* reported that the Lubbock Vaughn Quartet gave a rousing performance at a Kiwanis meeting.⁷⁹ The newspaper reported that the Kiwanis were treated to "splendid music" and that "Lubbock has something to be proud of in the quartette, and when you hear that Vaughn is just as much in the singing world as [John Phillips] Sousa is in the band business, don't take it for naught, for that bunch proved that the Vaughn bunch know their business." The article goes on to say that the "Kiwanians were not willing to let those fellows off with one song, but brought them to their feet again with cheer upon cheer...and of course they delivered the goods in their usual manner, to the delight of all present."⁸⁰

From 1910 to the 1950s, the James D. Vaughn Music

Normal School in New Market, Virginia, in order to further his knowledge about gospel harmony. His efforts paid off, as the local success of the Vaughn Boys Quartet confirmed the power of performance harmony to publicize gospel music.⁸²

In May 1890, shortly after marrying, James Vaughn moved to Cisco, Texas, and continued his work as a schoolteacher. In 1892, he met Ephraim Hildebrand of the Hildebrand-Burnett Music Company based in Roanoke, Virginia. Hildebrand traveled the country teaching advanced normal schools and convention singing schools. Many potential students had domestic commitments or little time and money to travel long distances to attend music schools, so such traveling teachers as Hildebrand provided opportunities for those living in more remote areas to pursue a musical education. Hildebrand not only further kindled Vaughn's love of music but also inspired Vaughn to begin composing original material. The two men collaborated on several songs that they published. After a

Plateau Singing Convention was the largest singing convention of its kind in the United States, attracting members from 40 counties across Texas and New Mexico.

Company had several male quartets that performed under the generic name, the Vaughn Quartet. By the late 1920s, the Vaughn Music Company sponsored as many as 16 groups that performed primarily throughout the South and Midwest, appearing at revivals, singing conventions, church gatherings, in concerts, and on radio and records in order to promote seven shape-note Southern gospel, Vaughn songbooks, and Vaughn normal singing schools.⁸¹

James David Vaughn was a pioneer of modern Southern gospel music, and some even consider him the "father" of the modern gospel quartet. His development of the professional gospel quartet helped to transform provincial Southern gospel music of the late nineteenth century into a widespread and flourishing industry. Vaughn was born December 14, 1864, in Giles County, Tennessee. He attended private school and excelled academically. He began a career as a schoolteacher, but he also had a keen aptitude for music. As a teenager, he attended shape-note singing schools and was well versed in Southern-style harmony. His love of music and his teaching abilities led him to become a music teacher. At eighteen, he began teaching music in his local church. He soon organized the Vaughn Boys Quartet, which included Vaughn and his three brothers. In 1883, he enrolled in the Ruebush-Kieffer

tornado destroyed most of the town of Cisco and everything they owned, Vaughn and his family left Texas and moved back to Tennessee, where he continued his work as an educator in the public schools. However, with his penchant for music, he soon shifted his focus back to music and music education.⁸³

In 1900, James Vaughn printed his first songbook—*Gospel Chimes*—and within two years he started the James D. Vaughn Publishing Company in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. In 1911 he started the Vaughn Music School. He also began traveling and training instructors to teach in rural singing schools—instructors he hoped would promote his musical publications. A year earlier, Vaughn had begun sponsoring a quartet to travel and promote his gospel songbooks. The use of the quartet as a promotional tool paid off, and by 1917 Vaughn had expanded his company and established three additional branches in Greenville, South Carolina; Midlothian, Texas; and Fitzgerald, Georgia.⁸⁴

Vaughn was quick to recognize the mass marketing potential of new technology, including the radio and phonograph. In 1921, he established the Vaughn Phonograph Company and sent a quartet to Wisconsin to make some custom recordings. While there, the quartet cut several songs, including Virgil Oliver (V.O.) Stamps's "Look for Me." In November 1922,

Vaughn received a license to begin broadcasting on radio in Tennessee under the call letters WOAN. By the mid-1930s, he had sold his radio station and discontinued his record company, but his publishing company remained strong. James Vaughn died on February 9, 1941.

The Vaughn Company established connections with Lubbock quartets through V.O. Stamps, who ran the Vaughn Music Company branch office in Jacksonville, Texas.⁸⁵ Building on the experience he gained by working for James Vaughn, V.O. Stamps eventually quit the Vaughn Music Company and started his own music company in Jacksonville, which grew into the hugely successful Stamps-Baxter Printing and Publishing Company. Indeed, before his sudden death in 1940, Stamps helped create one of the largest gospel music empires in history.

Stamps ran the branch office in Jacksonville, while Baxter operated an office in Chattanooga, Tennessee. They published their first songbook, also titled *Harbor Bells*, in 1926. The company followed with subsequent books on a yearly basis: *Golden Harp* (1927), *Sparkling Gems* (1928), *Crystal Rays* (1929), and *Priceless Pearls* (1930). After 1930, the company published and released at least two songbooks per year. Meanwhile, the two men moved the headquarters from Jacksonville to the thriving city of Dallas. The company later opened a third branch in Pangburn, Arkansas, which was managed by the prominent gospel songwriter Luther G. Presley. Because printing machines were so expensive, the burgeoning Stamps-Baxter enterprise had its books published by commercial presses. However, the company eventually bought the old printing presses belonging to

In 1926, Echols successfully auditioned for Frank Stamps's original Stamps Quartet and moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Virgil Oliver Stamps was born September 18, 1892, in Upshur County, Texas. He had five brothers, one of whom, Frank, also would play a significant role in the gospel music business. At an early age, both Virgil and Frank demonstrated a passion for music. Virgil attended his first singing school in 1907.⁸⁶ Between 1911 and 1914, he continued studying music and voice and taught singing part-time. At the age of 22, he wrote and self-published his first song: "Man Behind the Plow." As noted earlier, Virgil worked for several music publishers, including James D. Vaughn's music company in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. From 1915 into the 1920s, Virgil Stamps ran the Vaughan Publishing Company office in Jacksonville, Texas.⁸⁷ While Virgil pursued a career in music, his brother Frank Stamps acquired a formal education and served in the United States Navy during World War I, all the while continuing to study music. After the war, James Vaughn offered Frank a position with his company in Tennessee. The two Stamps brothers worked well with Vaughn but decided to leave and pursue their own music ventures.

In 1924, Virgil Stamps opened the V.O. Stamps Music Company in Jacksonville, Texas. That year he also published his first songbook, *Harbor Bells*, which became an instant success. However, the company struggled as it competed against well-established shape-note publishers. In the spring of 1926, Virgil collaborated with Jesse Randall (J.R.) "Pap" Baxter, Jr. to form the Stamps-Baxter Publishing Company.⁸⁸

the Armstrong Printing Company of Cincinnati, which had printed for Stamps-Baxter as well as most of the major songbook companies. After investing in printing machinery, the company finally began publishing and printing its own songbooks from a Dallas office on Beckley Avenue and changed its name to Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company. In addition to songbooks, Stamps-Baxter also produced a monthly newsletter titled *The Southern Gospel Music News*, which in 1940 became the *Gospel Singing News*. Throughout its existence, Stamps-Baxter attracted some of the best-known songwriters, sponsored many of the finest quartets, and employed skilled music instructors to teach at music schools. In 1936, The Stamps Quartet performed at the Texas Centennial and soon began regularly broadcasting a gospel program on radio station KRLD in Dallas. The classes and radio program became so popular that the company broadcast an "All Night Singing" event on KRLD at the end of classes in June. The first such event was held in the Cotton Bowl.⁸⁹

By 1936, it was clear that the growing business required larger facilities, so the company moved to the Dallas subdivision of Oak Cliff. After the death of Virgil Stamps in 1940, his brother Frank stepped in to help run the company; however, Frank soon split with J.R. Baxter to form his own company. Baxter continued to run the company until his death in 1960. At that point, Baxter's wife Clarice "Ma" Baxter ran the company for 12 more years until she died. She willed

the company to Lonnie B. Combs, Clyde Roach, Videt Polk, and Dwight Brock, who turned over operations to the Zondervan Corporation of Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1974. HarperCollins Publishers acquired Zondervan in 1988 and subsequently ended its music publishing in 1992.⁹⁰

As noted earlier, throughout the 1920s and 1930s gospel quartet music attained great popularity in the South. Many quartets came and went, but the quartets associated with music publishers endured the longest. For the Lubbock Texas Quartet, its association with Stamps-Baxter bolstered the group's success. Virgil Stamps traveled often to the West Texas region to perform, promote his gospel singing books, and offer teaching schools. After 1922, Stamps continued to work in the area and build a strong gospel music presence with the help of local people such as Tony Dyess and Odis "Pop" Echols.

Odis Echols, nicknamed "Pop," was born on May 7, 1903, in Enloe, Texas, one of 10 children of Mr. and Mrs. W.L. Echols. At the age of 17, Odis Echols became intrigued with radios after a friend showed him one built out of an apple box. A couple of years later, on January 23, 1922, he moved to Blacktower, New Mexico, west of Clovis, with his new wife Grace Traweek, whom he had married in Lubbock. Soon after settling down, Echols joined The Plateau Quartet. Members of the quartet included John F. Taylor, Earl Roberson, Odis Echols, and Lloyd Roberson. Their first radio broadcast was in Amarillo, Texas, in 1924, earning the quartet a total of \$50. While living in Curry County, New Mexico, Echols studied music and began teaching traditional music theory and shape-note singing in schools. He said, "I'd go and teach one hour a day in public schools, and then the whole community would come back to the schoolhouse at night, and I'd teach them how to direct songs and lead music."⁹¹

In 1926, Echols successfully auditioned for Frank Stamps's original Stamps Quartet and moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee. A year later, Frank Stamps reorganized the group and changed the name to the All-Star Quartet, although it is generally referred to as the Original Stamp's Quartet. The group consisted of Frank Stamps (bass), Palmer Wheeler (first tenor), Roy Wheeler (second tenor), and Odis Echols (baritone). In the spring of 1927, the group added a fifth member, jazz pianist Dwight Brock. Echols discovered Brock playing piano in a drugstore in Haleyville, Alabama. Brock became famous for his rhythmic piano playing and the instrumental turnaround between verses in gospel music. The quartet was the first to incorporate a fifth member, something that soon caught on with other gospel groups.

The All Star Quartet performed primarily in the South. A standard performance included both gospel music and secular hits of the day. Typically, members would perform solo

numbers at some point in order to showcase their individual styles. In particular, Echols regularly earned standing ovations for his rendition of Kern and Hammerstein's classic tune, "Ol Man River." The quartet made most of its money at concerts and church gatherings by selling Stamps-Baxter songbooks during intermission and after the shows.⁹²

On October 14, 1927, after a show in Knoxville, Tennessee, a representative of the Okeh Record Company approached the group about making a record. The group had never recorded before, so the members were excited about the prospect. However, when the quartet returned to its home office in Chattanooga, they discovered that Frank Stamps had received a letter from the Victor Recording Company, also offering to record the group. The Victor Company mistakenly believed that the Quartet was a "colored" group.⁹³ Despite this initial misunderstanding, Ralph Peer of Victor instructed the quartet to go to Atlanta, Georgia, for an audition. After arriving in Atlanta, Stamps and Echols met Peer at the Biltmore Hotel. They all agreed to forgo the audition and begin recording. Peer asked the group to record "Bringing in the Sheaves" and "Rescue the Perishing," which they did on October 20, 1927. The Stamps Quartet recorded the songs that Peer had requested but then persuaded him to record some additional songs that were popular at their shows.

Two of these songs, later released together, were "Give the World a Smile" and "Love Leads the Way." "Give the World a Smile" was the first gospel record to sell 500,000 copies. The song featured "afterbeats" or "backfire," which is a style of counterpoint singing that many classic gospel quartets utilized.⁹⁴ The song became the group's theme song, and many other quartets have covered the tune over the years.

By 1929, Pop Echols left the Stamps Quartet and moved back to Clovis, New Mexico. He took a job at the Fox Drugstore in its newly created music department and organized his first Melody Boys Quartet, which would be his primary quartet for the next few years.⁹⁵ In 1930, Echols formed the Fox Trio in Clovis with Palmer Wheeler. In addition, Echols sometimes sang with his brothers Horace and Coy as the Echols Brothers Trio. However, as the Great Depression of the 1930s worsened, Echols decided to leave New Mexico and return to Texas.

In early 1934 Echols moved to Lubbock and opened a songbook store and a music lessons studio for the Stamps-Baxter Music Company at 1015 A Avenue H. He taught 10-night singing schools at various churches throughout West Texas, including Reverend George Dean's church in Plainview. The Reverend's son, Jimmy Dean, who would go on to become a country music recording star, attended the music school.⁹⁶ In late 1934, or possibly early 1935, Echols



Echols School of Music South Side Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, 1936. Courtesy of Crossroads of Music Archive, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, Echols Family Collection, AV006.

formed the Odis Echols's All-Star Texans Quartet with Denver Crumpler (later famous with the Statesmen Quartet), Marlin LeMaster, and Don Smith.

In January 1936, the All-Star Texans joined Harley Sadler's 18th Annual Tour, which began in Abilene, Texas. Odis Echols settled in Abilene and taught music at the Hall Music Store. He also held singing schools in the area and performed on local radio programs, including a 30-minute program on KRBC that featured Echols and several other well-known entertainers. The first quarter hour offered sacred songs such as "He Lifted Me," "His Eye's On the Sparrow," "List to the Voice," "Pearly White City," and "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," while the closing segment showcased quartets, duos, and soloists performing popular music. For example, the Neighborhood Boys Cut-ups sang "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Dolly Bryant did "Basin St. Blues," while June Moore performed "Blue Hours" and Lucille Ragsdale rendered "The One Rose." The show closed with the song "Dinah."⁹⁷

Echols had organized and coached the N.B.C. (Neighborhood Boys Cut-ups) youth quartet, made up of Wood Butler, Jr., Kenneth Day, Milton Reese (all age 12), and Barron Butler (age seven). In 1936, Billy Rose built the soon-to-be-famous Casa Mañana Theater and produced programs in Fort Worth with prominent New York talent in order to compete with the 1936 Texas Centennial events in Dallas. Casa Mañana featured such acts as Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, fan dancer Sally Rand, and the Canova Trio. Festivities included a weekly children's amateur program, with scouts from Universal, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Paramount studios looking for unique talent. On July 28, the N.B.C. Quartet auditioned for Whiteman at the Ringside Club in Fort Worth and won first place among 22 contestants. The quartet then rehearsed with Whiteman and performed twice on broadcasts from the Ringside Club on August 2. On these broadcasts, the N.B.C. Quartet sang, "Old McDonald Had a Farm," and received high praise from industry

representatives and critics. A few weeks later, the Echols-trained youth quartet made a screen test at Casa Mañana for Universal Pictures and Hal Roach Studios.⁹⁸

The following year, Echols and members of the Original Stamps Quartet reunited to tour and to perform on WDAG radio in Greensboro, North Carolina. Unfortunately, the Depression and tough economic times made the reunion short-lived. Echols returned to Abilene once again to perform and convene singing schools. Frank Stamps traveled to Abilene in July of that year and began work with Echols on various programs, including singing schools.

In 1938, Echols reorganized the Stamps Melody Boys in Hot Springs, Arkansas, to perform on radio station KTHS. Later that year Echols moved to WLAC in Nashville, Tennessee, to host a Saturday Night All Gospel Show. One of Echols's biggest fans was a young Ernie Ford from Bristol, Tennessee, who would later have a very successful country music career using the stage name "Tennessee" Ernie Ford.

In 1939, Echols moved the Stamps Melody Boys to Louisville, Kentucky, to radio station WHAS, a CBS affiliate. Included in the quartet was Doy Ott, who later gained fame with the Statesmen Quartet. The Stamps Melody Boys became popular so quickly that, during its first week of broadcasting on WHAS, the group received 1,746 thank-you cards and letters in one day, setting a record for a CBS station. With the Melody Boys success, Echols convinced radio executives to let his group broadcast a gospel music show coast to coast on the Mutual Radio Network. The group broadcast over 150 stations, a first for a gospel group. The Melody Boys continued their daily broadcast on WHAS under the sponsorship of Sieberling Tires. During the summer months, the group played tent shows throughout Kentucky and Indiana, sharing the bill with such prominent secular artists as Pee Wee King and the Golden West Cowboys and Eddie Arnold, and drawing large crowds wherever they performed. However, with the onset of World War II, the group disbanded.

Odis Echols returned to West Texas and bought a farm 16 miles south of Lubbock. Because local farmers were beginning to use improved irrigation techniques, farming in the normally arid region seemed a promising venture for Echols. He and his family worked the farm from 1942 to 1943, most likely growing "fertalia," a type of sorghum native to Sudan in Africa. However, in 1943, Odis Echols decided that farming was not for him and moved back to Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Echols reorganized the Melody Boys Quartet to perform on KTHS and formed the Harmony Boys to sing on either KLRA or KARK in Little Rock. He also bought the Hartford Publishing Company, and his quartets traveled a four-state area performing and selling Hartford songbooks. Hartford

Publishing Company became the second-largest gospel music publisher at the time, surpassed only by Stamps-Baxter in Dallas and Chattanooga. In 1946, Echols sold his interest in Hartford Publishing and moved to Shreveport, Louisiana.

In Shreveport, Echols and his Melody Boys began performing on KWKH radio on March 19, 1946.⁹⁹ Their show ran Monday through Saturday at 8:30 a.m. By April 10, the group was broadcasting twice daily at both 6:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.¹⁰⁰ Echols leased the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium for Saturday night events, and KWKH's management approached him about starting a new show that could compete with Nashville-based WSM's increasingly popular live music program, *The Grand Ole Opry*. Echols rose to the challenge, and soon regular KWKH entertainers, including Echols, Harmie Smith, and the Shelton Brothers launched *The Red River Valley Round Up*. Echols served as emcee and brought in talented but relatively unknown entertainers, such as Faron Young, Hank Locklin, Johnny Horton, Jim Reeves, Webb Pierce, and Tommy Sands. After some time, Echols and others changed the name of the show to *The Louisiana Hayride*, which would help launch the careers of Elvis Presley and countless other entertainers. In late 1947, KWKH bought Pop Echols's interest in the show, so he briefly moved his family back to Lubbock.¹⁰¹

Ever restless, Echols moved on from Lubbock to Los Angeles, appearing with his Melody Boys on Bob Crosby's *Club 15* on CBS radio. Echols also made other personal appearances at churches and gospel concerts, and he taught gospel schools in Fresno and Los Angeles, occasionally reuniting with friends for casual singings. These informal sessions included such notable musicians as Ernie Ford, Merle Travis, Jimmy Wakely, and others.

In 1949, Echols was back in Lubbock, where he formed a new version of the Melody Boys Quartet. KSEL radio featured the quartet with Bob Nash as the announcer. The group performed often, including at events for visiting dignitaries such as U.S. Senator Lyndon B. Johnson and various state governors. Echols continued working at KSEL into the early 1950s as an announcer and often hosted events throughout the area. At KSEL, he auditioned numerous up-and-coming musicians. One such talent was Bobby Keys, a young saxophone player from Slaton, Texas. Echols told Keys that if he kept practicing, he could make it in show business. Keys eventually became a highly sought-after studio session musician and also played saxophone for many years with the legendary rock-and-roll band, the Rolling Stones. Many years later, Odis Echols, Jr. contacted the Rolling Stones to ask for tickets to a concert at the Rose Bowl. Keys met Odis Jr., at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles with four tickets and



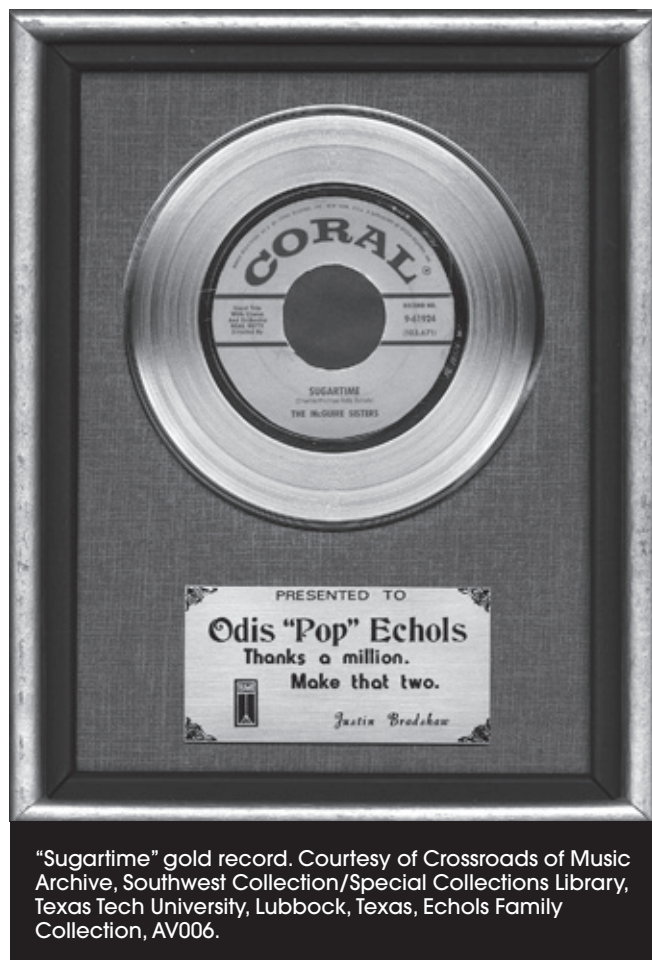
Grand opening of the Nu Vue Theater in Abernathy, Texas. Talent for the event was Pop Echols and his Melody Boys Quartet, Charlene Condray, and Bill Myrick and the Mayfield Brothers, June 15 and 16, 1950. Courtesy of Crossroads of Music Archive, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, Echols Family Collection, AV006.

backstage passes to the show, saying, "These tickets are a thank you for Pop Echols."¹⁰²

Another entertainer who credits Pop Echols for influencing her career is Charlene Condray Hancock, born in Morton, Texas, into a musical family that encouraged her to sing both religious and popular country music.¹⁰³ Hancock first studied with Pop Echols at the Four Square Gospel church in Lubbock. Although not a member of the church, she attended shape-note singing schools there and took a few private lessons from Echols. Hancock said that Echols taught her voice projection and to avoid yodeling, so she would not ruin her voice. He also taught her how to be comfortable on stage by telling her, "When you look at the audience and see them intently looking at you, smile and they will smile back. It will make you more comfortable, they want you to do well."¹⁰⁴ Echols invited Hancock to perform several times at high school auditoriums and churches. One major event was the grand opening of the Nu-Vue Theater in Abernathy, Texas, on June 15 and 16,

1950. Talent for the grand opening included Echols and his Melody Boys Quartet, Charlene Condray (Hancock), and Bill Myrick and the Mayfield Brothers, who had been hosting the KSEL Jamboree on Saturday Nights at Sled Allen's theater. The Mayfield Brothers performed "Orange Blossom Special" and Condray sang "A Perfect Day."¹⁰⁵

By the time she was 16, Charlene Condray performed regularly on KDUB's *Circle 13 Dude Ranch Show*. Because KDUB was Lubbock's only television station at the time, she was a local celebrity and was nicknamed "Lubbock's Sweetheart." Local bandleader Tommy Hancock saw her perform and asked her to join his popular Western swing band, the Roadside Playboys. Within a few years, the two married, had children, and started a successful family band that performed all over the state and had a major influence on Lubbock's music scene. The case of Charlene Condray Hancock is yet another example of how, if not for Pop Echols, the history of music in West Texas might be quite different today.



"Sugartime" gold record. Courtesy of Crossroads of Music Archive, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, Echols Family Collection, AV006.

In 1953, Echols moved back to Clovis, New Mexico, and purchased KCLV radio. At KCLV, he started a Saturday Breakfast Club that featured many regional and national celebrities, including such politicians as Senator Clinton Anderson and Governor Jimmy Davis.

In 1957, Pop Echols appeared on national television's *This is Your Life* at the request of Tommy Sands, who credited Echols with starting him in show business.¹⁰⁶ That same year, Echols met a young Farwell, Texas, farmer named Charlie Phillips, and began managing his career and building a successful songwriting partnership. The duo collaborated on two songs, "Sugartime" and "One Faded Rose." They cut demo records of the songs at Norman Petty Studios, with local Lubbock artists Buddy Holly on guitar, Jerry Allison on drums, Joe B Mauldin on bass, Jimmy Blakely on steel guitar, and Charlie Phillips on vocals. In 1958, Bob Thiel produced the song "Sugartime" with McGuire Sisters vocals; the song went gold and reached Number One on the pop charts.

Pop Echols continued to work in the music business while living in Clovis. In addition to his far-reaching musical impact,

he also influenced the appearance of an entire generation of gospel quartet singers. Well-known for his carefully groomed pencil-thin mustache, Echols once stated, "The Beatles started long hair. I started the mustache." In fact, many gospel quartet singers began sporting mustaches similar to Echols'. He was a well-loved, highly respected, and very influential figure in gospel music during the first half of the twentieth century. He had a very good attitude, was very outgoing, and everyone liked him. Although Odis "Pop" Echols died on March 23, 1974, in Clovis, New Mexico, his influence is still evident in religious and secular circles, especially throughout the American Southwest.

For 80 years, little attention has been paid to the Lubbock Texas Quartet and the profound impact of gospel music on Southern rural populations. Providing inexpensive entertainment and bolstering social cohesion in perilous times, groups such as the Lubbock Texas Quartet traveled extensively, teaching seven shape-note gospel music to communities that otherwise might not have had access to music education. ★

Notes

- 1 James R. Goff Jr., *Close Harmony: A History of Southern Gospel* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 65.
- 2 James Lyon, *Urania: A Choice Collection of Psalm-Tunes, Anthems, and Hymns* (New York: De Capo Press, 1974, 1761); William Billings, *The New England Psalm Singer* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1770); William Smith and William Little, *The Easy Instructor*, (Albany: Websters & Skinners and Daniel Steele, 1798); Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King, eds., *The Sacred Harp: A Collection of Psalms and Hymn Tunes, Odes and Anthems, Selected from the Most Eminent Authors, Together with Nearly One Hundred Pieces Never Before Published. Suited to Most Metres, and Well Adapted to Churches of Every Denomination, Singing Schools and Private Societies. With Plain Rules for Learners*, (1844).
- 3 For further discussion on shape-note singing and the *Sacred Harp* see Francis E. Abernethy, "Sacred Harp Music," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/xbsdd>), accessed September 08, 2014. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Modified on May 19, 2014. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.
- 4 For more on the history of the Stamps-Baxter music and publishing empire, see Greg Self, "Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company," Shaun Stalzer "Stamps Quartet," and N.D. Giesenschlag, Virgil Oliver Stamps," in *The Handbook of Texas Music*, 2nd edition, ed. Laurie E. Jasinski (Denton, TX: Texas State Historical Association, 2012), 571-573.
- 5 Tony Q. Dyess World War I Draft Registration Card, 12 December 1918, <http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=6482&iid=TX-1983778-2692&cat=Tony+Q&ln=Dyess&st=r&csrc=&p=id=16448601> (Accessed November 7, 2009); Registration Location: Wilbarger County, Texas; Roll 1983778; Draft Board: 0; Ancestry.com. *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2005. Original data: United States, Selective Service System. *World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration. M1509, 4,582 rolls. Imaged from Family History Library microfilm.
- 6 Untitled classified news item number 2, *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 30, 1919, p. 9. Dyess could not make the final move until he gathered all of his farm crops.
- 7 "Shallowater Class Gives Recital Last Saturday," *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 30, 1919, p. 11.
- 8 Untitled classified news item number 1, *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 30, 1919, p. 9.
- 9 They settled on a farm two miles south of the old Lubbock County Courthouse and two miles from a small schoolhouse on Route A; "Early Lubbock Settlers Turned Family Name Into Trademark," *Lubbock Avalanche Evening Journal*, July 4, 1975, sec. B, p. 9; "A Snap," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 1, 1920, p. 12. The *Lubbock Avalanche* article from 1975 states the family farm was two miles south of the courthouse. The second reference to the location of the family farm from the schoolhouse is from Tony Dyess's 1920 classified ad in which he put his 640 acres of land up for quick sale through Holland's Abstract office. *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 1, 1920, p. 12; *Lubbock Avalanche*, June 3, 1920, p. 14; Two years later Dyess bought a house and four lots at 1624 Fourth Street. "Dyess, TQ gro 1624 4th pho 374," *Directory of Lubbock*, vol. 1 (Lubbock: The Plains Journal, Inc., 1925), 118; "Tony Q. Dyess & Sons," *Directory of Lubbock*, vol. 1, 332; At the Fourth Street location, Dyess established a grocery store called "Tony Q. Dyess and Sons." Because Dyess's name sounded like the word "dice," the proprietor's sign had two dice on it showing a two and a five. The store carried staple and fancy groceries. It also served as a precinct-voting place. "Early Lubbock Settlers Turned Family Name Into Trademark," *Lubbock Avalanche Evening Journal*, July 4, 1975, sec. B, p. 9.
- 10 Besides music, Dyess was also active in the community. Dyess became a Mason and a member of the South Plains Odd Fellows Association. He reportedly participated in the laying of the cornerstone at Texas Technological College. He ran in 1922 for Lubbock County Tax Collector, but during the first Democratic primary in July, he did not receive enough votes to continue and dropped out of the race soon afterward. "The I.O.O.F. Association Met Here This Week," *Lubbock Avalanche*, August 11, 1921, p. 1; Mr. and Mrs. Dyess provided music for the meeting from "Early Lubbock Settlers Turned Family Name Into Trademark," July 4, 1975, sec. B, p. 9; "Announcement," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 20, 1922, p. 16; "Political Announcement," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 27, 1922, p. 13; "Political Announcement," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 31, 1922, p. 12; "To the Voters of Lubbock County," *Lubbock Avalanche*, July 28, 1922, p. 7; "Tony Q. Dyess Candidate for Tax Collector," *Lubbock Avalanche*, July 18, 1922, p. 4; In his political advertisement on July 18, 1922, Dyess appealed to voters and stated that he would "[n]ot only be on the job in the office when you call, but will have 'set' dates in Slaton, Idalou and Shallowater to collect taxes and thereby save time and expense at the busy time of the year for you."
- 11 "Lubbock County Singing Convention Has Record Breaking Attendance at Carlisle Fifth Sunday Convention," *Lubbock Avalanche*, February 10, 1922, p. 11; "Slide Locals of the Past Week," *Lubbock Avalanche*, February 10, 1922, p. 7.
- 12 "Singing at Carlisle," *Lubbock Avalanche*, June 10, 1920, p. 15; "Cumberland Revival Closed Last Sunday; Reported Good Results," *Lubbock Avalanche*, July 28, 1921, p. 1; "Monroe News Items of the Past Week," *Lubbock Avalanche*, March 3, 1922, p. 6; In the preceding newspaper article it is reported that Dyess entertained a Farmers Union with singing and guitar playing.
- 13 "Early Lubbock Settlers Turned Family Name Into Trademark," p. 9.
- 14 "Hoi Ye That Musical Thirst," *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 27, 1921, p. 15; "Lubbock County Singing Convention at Slaton," *Lubbock Avalanche*, April 28, 1922, p. 11.
- 15 "Acuff News Items of the Past Week," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 1, 1921, p. 11; "News of the Week from Woodrow Com.," *Lubbock Avalanche*, March 17, 1922, p. 10; Dyess taught a ten-night singing school in Woodrow and received his payment from the proceeds of the box supper; a common practice for paying singing teachers.
- 16 "Community Singing Contest was an Interesting Feature of South Plains Fair Which Closed Sat.," *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 13, 1923, p. 3. The Monroe singing class won first place, Center took second, and the Johnston community class of Terry County followed in third.
- 17 Classified Advertisement, *Lubbock Avalanche*, June 3, 1920, p. 14. The songbook is most likely: B.B. Bateman and G. M. Bateman, *Evangel Light: A Choice Collection of Songs, New and Old, for Church, Sunday School, Convention and Evangelistic Service*, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1920.
- 18 "Notice," *Lubbock Avalanche*, November 29, 1921, p. 12.
- 19 "Baseball Mangers Met in Lubbock Wednesday," *Lubbock Avalanche*, April 7, 1922, p. 5; "Annual Banquet of Lubbock C. of C. Tuesday Evening," *Lubbock Avalanche*, May 12, 1922, p. 4. At the Chamber of Commerce banquet, the Home Brew quartet and Peerless quartet both performed. It is not the famed Peerless quartet of the era that performed because R.I. Wilson is named as one of the members. "Peerless quartet Made a Trip to Slaton Friday," *Lubbock Avalanche*, April 18, 1922, p. 6.
- 20 "Fair Boosters Left Thursday morning for an All Day Trip (Accompanied by 'Darky' quartette)," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 22, 1922, p. 1; "Junior C. of C. Excursions were Successful in Every Way," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 26, 1922, p. 1. According to the article the quartet "dressed as negro comedians" and played a significant part in the success of the excursion. The author goes on to say, "[T]hey are entertainers of real merit [newspaper author's emphasis]...and proved their knowledge of the entertainment art." "Fair Boosters Well Received on First of Three Jaunts," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 12, 1924, p. 2.
- 21 "Annual Banquet of the C. of C. Held Tuesday Evening," *Lubbock Avalanche*, May 12, 1922, p. 1.
- 22 "Home Brew quartette will put on Program," *Lubbock Avalanche*, May 30, 1922, p. 9; "Home Brew quartette will put on Program," *Lubbock Avalanche*, June 2, 1922, p. 1. In the announcement, Dyess is referred to as Professor Tony Q. Dyess.
- 23 The Home Brew quartet is referenced and highly praised several times as the entertainment at Lubbock Rotary Club functions. "Rotary Notes," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 17, 1922, p. 4; The author of the previous Rotary Notes commented that, "Talk about music! That was some

- quartette Robert induced to sing for us at the luncheon Wednesday. To pass the following boys on the street you would not think they had it in them, now would you. But believe me when T.Q. Dyess, L.L. Wendell, R.I. Wilson, and R.A. Holland get together with their well-blended voices on some of their catchy songs, everybody sits up and takes notice. Come again boys. It was fine and worlds cannot express how the club appreciate[s] your singing for them." Other quartets with the name Home Brew were also in Wichita Falls and Amarillo and consisted of members from the local Rotary Club. More research is needed to see if members of the Lubbock Home Brew quartet joined the Lubbock Rotary Club, because the quartet often appeared as guests at Lubbock meetings. "Local quartette Will Entertain Rotarians," *Lubbock Avalanche*, January 3, 1922, p. 11; "Rotary Notes," *Lubbock Avalanche*, March 3, 1922, p. 8; "Rotary Notes," *Lubbock Avalanche*, April 28, 1922, p. 10. "Rotary Notes," *Lubbock Avalanche*, March 7, 1922, p. 8; "Rotarians Hear Fine program at Wednesday's Luncheon-South Plains Fair Topic of Discussion," *Lubbock Morning*, October 19, 1923, p. 2; "Rotary Minstrel Wins," *Lubbock Avalanche*, December 15, 1923, p. 1; "Rotary Program," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, April 20, 1928, p. 10; "Rotarians Finish Work Here, Leave on Carlsbad Trip," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, April 21, 1928, p. 6.
- 24 "Home Brew quartet Will Render Program July 4," *Lubbock Avalanche Journal*, June 20, 1922, p. 12; "Program Community Auditorium," *Lubbock Avalanche*, July 4, 1922, p. 6; The name L.M. Brooks appears in many Lubbock, Texas, phone books with one volume using the name Louis M Brooks. Therefore one can assume his name is Louis.
- 25 Tony Dyess died on August 18, 1927 after battling a lengthy illness; he was 45 years old. "Keys of City Tendered Visiting Peddlers for Today's Picnic Jubilee," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche-Journal*, June 25, 1927, p. 6.
- 26 "At the Churches," *Lubbock Avalanche*, 12 April 1924, p. 2. The name Windell is most likely L.L. Wendell and is misspelled.
- 27 "Visiting Teachers Entertained at Wolfarth House," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 6, 1923, p. 3; "A Splendid Musical Program was Rendered at Rotary Lunch at the Armory Building Today," *Lubbock Daily Avalanche*, July 17, 1924, p. 8; Lubbock telephone books list a G.A. Gunn with the first name Glenn.
- 28 "Beautiful New Baptist Church Building Dedicated by Pastor and Congregation Sunday A.M.," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, January 15, 1924, Vol. 2, No. 66, p. 7.
- 29 Mrs. Percy Spencer, ed., "Society, Church and Club News," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, October 11, 1925, p. 2.
- 30 "Quartets Give Program," *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, January 22, 1929, p. 10.
- 31 "Quartets Give Program," p. 10; C.L. Gunn was G.A. Gunn's brother.
- 32 As noted earlier, 1929 is the first mention of the Lubbock quartet, and 1943 seems to be the last reference to the group until a short-lived version of the Lubbock Stamps quartet during the late 1940s or early 1950s. J. Howard Rogers led the short-lived group while living in Lubbock. Howard helped start the Southern Gospel Music Association chapter in Texas in 1972 and was inducted into the Texas Music Hall of Fame in 1995. "J. Howard Rogers," <http://www.tgmhf.org/hall/hall.php?page=rogers> (accessed December 15, 2009); "A Testament to the Late J. Howard Rogers," <http://theparisnews.com/story.lasso?ewcd=d3b8d47b154f2067> (accessed December 15, 2009); "J. Howard Rogers in Gospel Music 60 Years," *The Paris News*, May 5, 1985, p. 3.
- 33 The date is found in the appendix of William Randle's dissertation listing Columbia Records coupling notices and is almost certainly the release date of the record. William Randle, "History of Radio and Broadcasting and Its Social and Economic Effect on the Entertainment Industry: 1920-1930," (PhD diss., Western Reserve University, September 1966), 1089. Charles Wolfe references Randle's coupling notices statistics in his article "Columbia Records and Old-Time Music." Coupling notices are company file references that give basic information about the origin of a record. Wolfe states that the coupling notices contained the date the record was released and not recorded; thus, February 28, 1930 should be the release date for the Lubbock Texas Quartet record. Charles Wolfe, "Columbia Records and Old-Time Music," in *Exploring Roots Music: Twenty Years of the JEMF Quarterly, American Folk Music and Musicians Series*, No. 8, ed. Nolan Porterfield (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004), 202. The D in the label series stands for Domestic.
- 34 Archie Green, "Hillbilly Issue," *The Journal of American Folklore* 78, no. 309 (July-September, 1965), 215.
- 35 Tony Russell, *Country Music Records: A Discography, 1921-1942* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14-15; Tony Russell, *Country Music Originals: The Legends and the Lost* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 64; "Columbia (USA) 15000D Series Numerical Listing," <http://www.78discography.com/COL15000D.htm> (accessed June 9, 201).
- 36 Brian Rust, *The Columbia Master Book Discography, Volume III: Principal U.S. Matrix Series, 1924-1934* (West Port Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 529; Ross Laird and Brian Rust, *Discography of Okeh Records, 1918-1934* (West Port, Connecticut: Praeger, 2004), 593-595.
- 37 The Okeh releases, both religious and secular, are as follows: 45396 Stamps-Baxter School of Music "I'll be Singing Forever" (MX 403387) and "I am O'ershadowed By Love" (MX 403386); Oscar and Doc Harper "Beaumont Rag" (MX 403348), "Billy on the Low Ground" (MX 403349), "Terrell Texas Blues" (MX 403346), and "Dallas Blues" (MX 403344); Harmony Four "He's a Wonderful Savior to Me" (MX 403373), "I'm Sailing On" (MX 403372), "My Friend Devine" (MX 403370), and "I'll Know Him" (MX403371). Laird and Rust, *Discography of Okeh Records*, 593-595.
- 38 Marion Snider, interview by author, September 18, 2009.
- 39 Virgil O. Stamps, *Virgil O. Stamps Favorite Radio Songs: A Collection of Sacred Songs, New and Old, Compiled Especially for Radio Programs* (Dallas: Stamps-Baxter Music Co., 1937), No. 101.
- 40 "Glory Special," *Copyright Encyclopedia*, <http://www.faqs.org/copyright/glory-special-and-19618-other-titles-part-005-of-041/> (accessed November 2, 2009); "Glory Special & 19618 other titles/1," *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Glory_Special_%26_19618_other_titles/1 (accessed 2 November 2009). The two preceding web sites page lists gospel songs and the writers from a copyright registration by "Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc. d. b. a. Stamps-Baxter Music" and "Bridge Building Music, Inc.," consisting of 41 parts. Document numbers V3432D859-V3432D899. Complete document is "V3432 D859-899 P1-1013."
- 41 It is not certain what the acronym S. N. M. I. represents, but it is most likely Southern Normal Music Institute.
- 42 Otis J. Knippers, *Who's Who Among Southern Singers and Composers* (Lawrenceburg, TN: James D. Vaughn Music Publisher, 1937), 49.
- 43 Library of Congress Copyright Office, *Catalogue of Copyright Entries; Published by Authority of the Acts of Congress of March 3, 1891, of June 30, 1906, and of March 4, 1909, Part 3 Musical Compositions, Including: List of Copyright Renewals and List of Notices of Users*, Vol. 19, Nos. 5 and 6 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1925), 436. The list of copyright shows B.B. Edmiaston publishing from Whitesboro and Waco, Texas, in 1924.
- 44 Church Record of Ministers at first united Methodist Church in Robert Lee. The information came from the minister at First United Methodist Church in Robert Lee, Pastor Steve Peyton.
- 45 "Mountain Gospel: The Sacred Roots of Country Music," JSP Records, #JSP-CD7755, 2005; "The Half Ain't Never Been Told: Early American Rural Religious Music: Classic Recordings Of The 1920's and 30's Vol. 1," Shanachie Entertainment Corp, 2005.
- 46 Lonnie and Thelma Robertson, *Lonnie and Thelma's Book of Beloved Hymns* (Dallas 8, Texas: Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company), No. 54.
- 47 During the interview with Marion Snider he said he thought that E. M Kitchen was a teacher in a community south of Lubbock, but a search for him has been unsuccessful. Snider, Dallas, 2009.
- 48 Robertson, *Lonnie and Thelma's Book of Beloved Hymns*, No. 54; J.R. Baxter ed. and compiled by Homer Morris, *Special Service Songs for Special Occasions* (Dallas 8, Texas: Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company, 1944), No. 94; Albert E. Brumley, *Albert E. Brumley's Log Cabin Songs and Ballads* (Powell, MO: Albert E. Brumley and Sons,

1974), 51. Much of the confusion over the owner of the copyright may stem from the fact that many old folk, gospel, and blues songs were traditional and had been around for years. Typically, whoever made the arrangement of the specific song received credit as “arranger” or copyright owner.

- 49 “William Alfred McKinney,” in *Virgil O. Stamps Radio Song Album*, ed. Virgil O. Stamps, (Dallas: The Stamps-Baxter Stamps Music Company, 1937), 190. William A. McKinney, *The Solid Rock for Radio, Conventions, Singing Schools and Wherever Special Gospel Songs are Needed* (Shannon, MS: McKinney Music Company), 1944.
- 50 The sales figures come from Danny Freeman of Rebel Records who has copies of sales figures from the Columbia Music Archives. Dave Freeman, interview by author, June 24, 2009; These same figures are supported by Tony Russell who used Dave Freeman as a source for his book Tony Russell, *Country Music Originals: The Legends and the Lost*, 64; World renowned country music scholar Charles K. Wolfe has also relied on Dave Freeman’s Columbia sales figures and files for his research. See Charles K. Wolfe, “Columbia Records and Old Time Music.” Matrix numbers are from Steve Abrams and Tyrone Settlemier, “COLUMBIA 78rpm Numerical Listing Discography: 15000D series,” *The Online Discographical Project*, <http://www.78discography.com/COL15000D.htm> (accessed August 4, 2007).
- 51 “Columbia Records Advertisement,” *Roane County Reporter*, July 30, 1930, p. 6; “Columbia Records Advertisement” *Roane County Reporter*, October 16, 1930, p. 16; *Charleston Daily Mail*, October 19, 1930, p. 13; *Charleston Gazette*, October 19, 1930, p. 7; *Charleston Gazette*, October 24, 1930, Section F, p. 5.
- 52 The parts listed are those, which have been published. However, many men often sang different parts as needed. For example, Homer Garrison stated that M. M. Meek sang bass although he could sing any part.
- 53 Wilson Carson did play and sing at the same time with the group when it consisted of only four members. It is possible he could have sung and played at the same time on the record, but it is unlikely. It is likely that other members of the Lubbock Texas quartet played instruments, but no mention of anyone playing guitar exists, except for Wilson Carson. A photo shows the Lubbock Stamps quartet comprised of Minnis Meek, Clyde Burleson, Wilson Carson, and Raymond Dyess. In the photo Wilson Carson is holding a guitar and the caption states the photo is from 1931. *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, “Early Lubbock Settlers Turned Family Name Into Trademark,” sec. B, p. 9. Although it is speculative, it is conceivable Wilson Carson played guitar on the record.
- 54 “Many Gather in B’ Spring for Songfest: Convention to be Concluded with Sessions Today,” *The Big Spring Daily Herald*, June 19, 1938, pp. 1, 10; “News Briefs,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, March 30 1935, p. 2; “News Briefs,” *Lubbock Morning Avalanche-Journal*, September 28, 1935, p. 2.
- 55 Garrison, interview, 1989; Snider, interview, 2009; Marion Snider, interview by Richard Mason, November 15, 1989, Southwest Collection, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas; Garrison, interview, 1989.
- 56 Garrison, interview, 1989; “250 Attend Reunion of Van Zandt County,” *Lubbock Avalanche Evening Journal*, June 19, 1950, p. 8.
- 57 Burleson’s obituary in the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal* indicates he sang on the record. The obituary states that “Burleson was a member of the first quartet to record for Columbia Records in 1927.” Yet, some uncertainty remains. The anomaly is that the recording date of 1927 is wrong; it should be 1929. In the obituary, it states Burleson sang with the Odis Echols quartet from 1929-1931, before forming his own group the Lubbock quartet in 1932. The 1932 date is wrong because he definitely performed with the group as early as January 1930. “Noted Gospel Singer Dies,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, January 11, 1967, sec. A, p. 7. Another clue Burleson sang on the record is that when one listens to the Lubbock Texas quartet songs, someone is definitely singing a very high tenor part on both songs. In fact, at first it sounds like a woman singing. No other clues are present that point to another man from Lubbock who could have sung the high tenor parts. That fact that Burleson sang with Echols beginning in 1929 yields yet another clue that Burleson likely sang on the record because of the Stamps-Baxter connection. In all, it appears Clyde Burleson did sing on the record.


- 58 www.Ancestry.com, “Database: 1920 United States Federal Census Detail: Year: 1920, Census Place: Farmersville, Collin, Texas; Roll: T625_1788; Page: 13B; Enumeration District: 12, Image: 935,” <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?h=93155683&db=1920usfedcen&indiv=try> (accessed December 17, 2009).
- 59 “Heart Attack Fatal to Lubbock Resident,” *Lubbock Morning Avalanche-Journal*, December 23, 1949, sec. I, p. 10; “Quartets Give Program,” p. 10.
- 60 “Heart Attack Fatal to Lubbock Resident,” sec. I, p. 10. Very little evidence exists that that Meek sang on the record. Through newspaper accounts, Homer Garrison, and Marion Snider it is clear Meek was a talented musician and had been a mainstay in the quartet. The best piece of evidence that Meek may have sang on the record is a posting on a genealogy website that states “Minnis sang with the Stamps-Baxter quartet of Lubbock, Texas, but only had one record made.” See Sherrylee Meeks, “McKeever Turner Lines,” <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=sherrylee&id=I116> (accessed November 7, 2009). The author attempted to contact Sherrylee Meeks, but her husband stated she had passed away. The husband was unable to verify where the information about Minnis Meek singing on an album was obtained. The only ambiguity about the preceding evidence is that Meek later sang baritone with The West Texas Entertainers along with Rueben Dyess (bass), Cecil Gunn (tenor), and Howard Kidwell (tenor). In a July 6, 1930 newspaper article an announcement states the West Texas Entertainers signed a recording contract to sing gospel songs for Columbia and Brunswick and planned to travel east to make the records. See “Local Singers to Sing for Records,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, July 6, 1930, sec. 2, p. 2. Searches through Columbia and Brunswick discographies did not reveal any songs recorded by The West Texas Entertainers. Thus, it seems likely Minnis sang on the Lubbock Texas quartet record.
- 61 Varying accounts of his birth year exist. Carson’s son and grandson said he was born in 1911. A social security record has 1912, and a census record approximates 1913. Most likely it was not 1913.
- 62 “U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946,” http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?rank=1&new=1&MSAV=0&msT=1&gss=angsg&gsfn=wilson+l.&gsln=carson&_81004010=1911&msbnpn=77806&msbnpn__ftp=Lubbock%2c+Lubbock%2c+Texas%2c+USA&_81004030=12+august+1992&msdpn=77806&msdpn__ftp=Lubbock%2c+Lubbock%2c+Texas%2c+USA&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=3869474&recoff=1+2+3&db=WWIIenlist&indiv=1 (accessed 18 December 2009).
- 63 Carson was 17 or 18 years old at the time of the recording. At the most, he only attended three years of high school, so he would have been out of school at the time of the recording, making it possible for him to travel to Dallas for the recording session. No other facts are evident linking anyone else to playing the guitar on the record. Oral histories and a photograph make it apparent that Carson was the guitar player for the Lubbock quartet for many years.
- 64 No evidence links Gunn or Brooks directly or indirectly to performing on the record. However, it is possible to deduce that they performed on the record by establishing who was unavailable at the time of the recording. Rueben and Raymond Dyess, Tony Q Dyess’s two sons, were both attending High School. Rueben was the first of the two brothers to join with members of the Lubbock quartet and begin singing professionally. Rueben toured with The West Texas Entertainers in 1930. He also toured with the Harley Sadler Show and then became a Methodist preacher. Raymond joined the Lubbock quartet in 1931. He later joined the Drugstore Cowboys and played with other bands before becoming a Methodist preacher in 1939. Raymond was too young to have performed on the record. Rueben was a senior in high school and from a newspaper account we know that he sang on a program for the 4-H Club’s Annual Achievement Day on December 7, 1929. Thus, it is doubtful Rueben recorded in Dallas on December 6, and then returned to Lubbock to perform at the 4-H event. Homer Garrison and Marion Snider did not join the group until 1933. Of the three remaining men left who may have been on the record, the two most likely candidates are C. L. Gunn and L.M. Brooks. C. L. Gunn and L.M. Brooks are mentioned several times after the recording as performing with various

- Lubbock Stamps groups. The last mention of G.A. Gunn performing with the group is June 30, 1929. A January 30, 1930 announcement in the *Lubbock Avalanche* lists a Stamps Trio performance for the Levelland, Chamber of Commerce—the trio consisted of C. L. Gunn, L.M. Brooks, and Clyde Burleson, which makes Cecil Gunn the likely choice to have been on the record. Throughout the quartet's existence Burleson, Brooks, and Meek were regular members.
- 65 Garrison, interview, 1989.
- 66 Garrison, interview, 1989; Burleson also bought Ford Fordor touring sedans in March of 1935 and in March of 1936. "Along Auto Row in Lubbock," *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, March 24, 1935, sec. 2, p. 3; "Along Auto Row in Lubbock," *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, March 15, 1936, sec. 2, p. 7.
- 67 Garrison, interview, 1989; Snider, interview, 1989.
- 68 "Miss Cordill Guest of Club: Musical Numbers Presented at Luncheon Session of Rotarians," *Big Spring Daily Herald*, June 2, 1936, p. 6.
- 69 Snider, interview, 1989.
- 70 Garrison, interview, 1989; Snider, interview, 1989.
- 71 Garrison, interview, 1989.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Snider, interview, 2009.
- 76 The Vaughn quartet from Jacksonville, Texas, performed at the High School auditorium with part of the proceeds going to the school. "Idalou Items of Interest in the Past Week," *Lubbock Avalanche*, October 6, 1921, p. 4.
- 77 "Big Crowd Attended the Singing Convention at Slaton on the Fifth Sunday Regardless of Rain," *Lubbock Avalanche*, May 5, 1922, p. 5; Tony Dyess was president of the Singing Convention, but was unable to attend the event. Because he sold Vaughn Publications and was the President of the Convention it seems likely Dyess was the man responsible for bringing the Vaughn quartet to the area. Another member of the Vaughn quartet was Marlin "Buster" Keeton, who later retired from music and moved to Lubbock to sell insurance, but still attended singing conventions. Keeton recounts in an interview traveling to West Texas to perform with the Vaughn quartet. Keeton also states V.O. Stamps was the first to call him "Buster." Marlin McKinney "Buster" Keeton, interview by Richard Mason, June 13 1987, Oral History Collection, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.
- 78 "Plateau Singing Convention Elects Local Man as V.P.," *Lubbock Avalanche*, June 30, 1922, p. 8.
- 79 The Lubbock Vaughn quartet is referenced in an article on September 15, 1922 in which local Judge C.W. Beene, a member of the quartet, said the quartet was unable to perform that evening. "Directors Elected at Meeting Junior C. of C. Wednesday Night," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 15, 1922, p. 1.
- 80 "Words of Kiwanis," *Lubbock Avalanche*, September 5, 1922, p. 9.
- 81 Goff, *Close Harmony*, 69; Charles Wolfe, "Vaughan Quartet," in *Encyclopedia of Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 409.
- 82 Goff, *Close Harmony*, 63-64; W.K. McNeil, "Vaughn, James David," in *Encyclopedia of Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 410.
- 83 Goff, *Close Harmony*, 64-66; McNeil, "Vaughn, James David," 410-411.
- 84 Goff, *Close Harmony*, 66-69; McNeil, "Vaughn, James David," 410.
- 85 Goff, *Close Harmony*, 75-76.
- 86 Charles Wolfe, "Stamps-Baxter," in *Encyclopedia of Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 370-371.
- 87 N.D. Giesenschlag, "Stamps, Virgil Oliver," *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/SS/fstac.html> (accessed October 12, 2009).
- 88 Baxter had been working as a branch office manager for A. J. Showalter and had known Virgil for about eight years; Giesenschlag, "Stamps, Virgil Oliver;" Mrs. Frank Stamps, "In Loving Memory: Frank Stamps (1896-1965)," in *Give the World a Smile* (Wesson, MS: M. Lynwood Smith, 1969); Goff, *Close Harmony*, 87-88.
- 89 Greg Self, "STAMPS-BAXTER MUSIC AND PRINTING COMPANY," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ehs03>), accessed July 10, 2014. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Modified on November 23, 2011. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 "Music Fete will Honor 'Pop' Echols," *The Baytown Sun*, July 7, 1972, p. 12.
- 92 Rebecca Folsom, "Give the World a Smile: A Professional Gospel Quartet of All-Stars, 1927-1932," *Society for American Music Bulletin*, Volume XXV, no. 3, (fall 1999), <http://www.american-music.org/publications/bullarchive/Folsom.html> (accessed February 19, 2011).
- 93 "Stamps Quartet Reunion," sound recording, April, 11, 1973.
- 94 Charles Wolfe, "Stamps Quartet," in *Encyclopedia of Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 370.
- 95 A photograph caption in the Program for the Odis "Pop" Echols Gospel Music Spectacular, July 8, 1972 lists Clyde Burleson and Henry Shipp as members of the Melody Boys, they also sang with the Lubbock Quartet. Echols and Burleson both led and sang with the Lubbock Quartet. The Melody Boys also worked for Stamps-Baxter. See the advertisement for "The Stamps Melody Boys Male Quartet," May 6, 1934, p. 7.
- 96 Unknown author, "History Outline of the Stamps Quartet and Odis 'Pop' Echols," undated, Odis Echols Collection (unprocessed collection), Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. Although the author is not on the history, it is most likely Odis Echols, Jr; For more on the life and career of Jimmy Dean, see Jennifer Cobb, "Jimmy Ray Dean," in *The Handbook of Texas Music*, 2nd edition, 161-162.
- 97 "Echols Singers Will Present Two Programs on KRBC," *Abilene Reporter News*, November 15, 1936, p. 3.
- 98 "Neighborhood Boy's Cutup Quartet Wins Screen Test," *The Abilene Daily Reporter*, August 16, 1936, p. 9; "Abilene Quartet Gets Screen Test," *The Abilene Daily Reporter*, September 14, 1936, p. 3; Odis Echols Collection, (unprocessed collection), Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.
- 99 *The Shreveport Times*, March 18, 1945, p. 19.
- 100 *The Shreveport Times*, April 10, 1945, p. 7.
- 101 "History Outline of the Stamps Quartet and Odis 'Pop' Echols," Echols Collection, Southwest Collection.
- 102 Odis Echols, Jr., interview by author, January 2009.
- 103 Carr and Munde, *Prairie Nights to Neon Lights*, 77. ; Ashley Sharise Pettiet, "Music, Dance and Freedom: The History of the Lubbock Cotton Club" (master's thesis, Texas Tech University, May 2007).
- 104 Charlene Condray Hancock, interview by author, June 13, 2013, Lubbock, Texas.
- 105 Charlene Condray Hancock, phone interview by author, June 11, 2014.
- 106 "This Is Your Life," Season 5, "Episode 5: Tommy Sands," April 10, 1957.



The Cowboy Song as Art Song

Daniel M. Raessler



Among the iconic figures that emerged from the American West, the cowboy proved as irresistible as he was durable. And no wonder—with stories by Ned Buntline, Bret Harte, and others that began appearing during the 1870s, increasing numbers of readers found themselves drawn to adventures set in that vast region.

In 1882, Buffalo Bill Cody presented the first of what became a 30-year run of variously named “Wild West Shows,” adding the excitement of a circus-like atmosphere to an already alluring image and culture. Western films, with or without singing cowboys and the phenomenon of country and Western music promoted the growth and capitalized on the popularity of Western culture. Portrayed as an indomitable, solitary figure, the pre-modern cowboy of fiction combined the wisdom of Solomon, the strength of Samson, the virtue of Sir Galahad, and the valor of Roland. During the era of the “singing cowboy” one might add that he also had a bit of Orpheus’s talent, as well.

The reality, of course, differs. To begin with, there is the name “cowboy,” a word that ranch hands rarely used. As historian Guy Logsdon points out, they referred to themselves as “punchers, cowpunchers, cowhands, cowpokes, buckaroos, wranglers, vaqueros, waddies, cowmen, and other less sophisticated, but colorful, sobriquets.”¹ Furthermore, cowboys were more ethnically diverse than they often have been portrayed in movies, books, magazines, on television, and through other sources. In *Cowboys of the Americas*, Richard W. Stratta estimates that during the peak period of the trail drives from Texas to the North (1860s-1880s), only about two-thirds of the cowboys involved were white. Nearly all of the rest were Mexican, Mexican American, or African American.² Finally, the epic clashes that entertained readers and audiences for generations were far removed from the actual daily routine of the typical cowboy’s life, which included long hours of tedious labor, boredom, paltry pay, crippling injuries and fatalities resulting from work or hostilities with others, and exposure to life-threatening extremes of weather. Despite this, the American cowboy has enjoyed mythic status for generations. His songs remain so firmly embedded in our folk traditions that most of us not only remember fragments of at least a few of them but find that they have the power to take us back to a time during our childhood when we aspired to membership in the fraternity of cowboys.

In spite of the cowboy’s popularity and the enduring appeal of his songs, few twentieth-century composers in the classical tradition transformed the music that cowboys sang into “art” songs. (According to *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th edition, an “art song” may be defined as a “song intended for the concert repertory, as distinct from a folk or popular song.”³) This is important because in the early twentieth century, when nationalism in music was a very popular topic of conversation, cowboy songs would have been a logical repertoire from which to draw in creating identifiably American music.

The discussion about nationalism in music may be traced back at least as far as the mid-nineteenth century, when composers and critics in this country staked out positions concerning whether and how to compose “nationalistic” works. Bohemian composer Antonín Dvořák inserted himself in the debate when, during his residency in this country (1892–1895), he wrote, “A while ago I suggested that inspiration for truly national music might be derived from the negro melodies or Indian chants.”⁴ He added that our composers should draw inspiration from the songs that appeal more strongly to Americans than any others, those melodies that “could stop him on the street if he were in a strange land and make the home feeling well up within him.”⁵ That sentiment aligned nicely with the aesthetics of some other composers, as well. Henry F. B. Gilbert and Harry T. Burleigh were drawn to the music of African Americans while Arthur Farwell, Charles Wakefield Cadman, and Charles S. Skilton embraced the music of certain American Indians. Predictably, other composers disagreed. Edward MacDowell, for example, argued that whatever nationalistic elements one hears in folk music are extraneous and, if removed, leave a melody that could just as well be Chinese as Scottish.⁶

Whether or not most classical composers of the early to mid-twentieth century were inclined to nationalism, formal settings of cowboy settings were a rarity. Except for the tune “Charlie Rutlage,” composer Charles Ives’s lone work of that type, the prominent “American Five” (Ives, Carl Ruggles, Wallingford Riegger, John Becker, and Henry Cowell) neither wrote nor arranged any cowboy songs.

Ultimately, as Charles Hamm points out, what many classical composers of the time period came to consider as distinctively American music was not essentially folk music, but music by immigrant urban Jewish composers, with names like Irving Berlin and George Gershwin and Aaron Copland, drawing on black, Jewish, Irish, and Italian styles, accepted both at home and abroad as the most distinctive American music of its time.⁷

Of the eight classical composers I found who arranged or created cowboy art songs, the most prolific among them—Oscar J. Fox and David W. Guion—not only came from and lived in Texas but also associated with cowboys. In fact, Guion was a prize-winning participant in rodeos in Colorado and in Wyoming.⁸ Their combined output totals more than 30 pieces, or about 75 percent of the songs I found, with most having been composed from the mid-1920s to early 1930s. Their interest in this genre perhaps was less an act of nationalistic fervor than it was a way of adapting the music with which they felt a particular affinity to the expressive medium in which they were so highly trained. The remaining composers,

with the exception of Arthur Farwell, had neither proximity to nor contact with the historical cowboy. They and their songs (in chronological order of publication) are:

Arthur Farwell	“The Lone Prairee” (1905)
Charles Ives	“Charlie Rutlage” (1921)
Seth Bingham	“Five Cowboy Songs” (1930)
Jack Beeson	“Cowboy Song” (1979)
Libby Larsen	“Cowboy Songs” (1979)
André Previn	“Sally Chisum remembers Billy the Kid” (1994) ⁹

When viewed against the panorama of early twentieth-century American classical composers and their works, or, for that matter, American composers of pop, jazz, ragtime, or other popular genres of this time period, this group is quite small, indeed.¹⁰ Before suggesting reasons for so little interest among professional American composers of that era for cowboy music, it is helpful to survey the collections of cowboy poetry and songs that were published during the opening decades of the twentieth century because those were, in most instances, where composers turned to find texts and tunes. One may then consider the art songs, with an emphasis on those by Fox and Guion. Finally, we can try and gain a better understanding of why so many classical composers of the early twentieth century remained indifferent to the music of the cowboy, a figure who otherwise has such a dominant presence in American culture.

The early twentieth-century composer who wanted to create an art song based on the cowboy faced a formidable challenge, most notably finding published examples of his poetry and songs. With his popular image not fully developed until the great cattle drives from the mid-1860s to the 1880s, the cowboy remained a relatively unnoticed figure in popular poetry until around 1900. With the exception of William L. Chittenden’s *Ranch Verses* (1893), which was published by G.P. Putnam’s Sons, cowboy poetry typically appeared in local newspapers and magazines read not by musicians living on the East Coast, but by ranchers in the West.¹¹

Publications containing cowboy songs began appearing by the late 1800s, but John Lomax’s *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910), whose 112 texts included 18 tunes, was the first that included both lyrics and music.¹² His was the collection used most frequently by the composers cited in this study. Charles J. Finger—of particular interest because David Guion, as a child, studied piano under him—contributed two volumes. Finger’s *Sailor Chanties and Cowboy Songs* (1923) included 21 song texts, while *Frontier Ballads* (1927) included eight (five with melodies) among chanteys and other work songs.¹³ Margaret Larkin’s *Singing Cowboy: A Book of Western Songs* (1931) sometimes is cited as the first collection in which a tune accompanied every text.¹⁴ At least two other collections

predate hers by a few years. Ina Sires's *Songs of the Open Range* (1928) and John White and George Shackley's *The Lonesome Cowboy: Songs of the Plains and Hills* (1929) include simple piano accompaniments for each song.¹⁵ Those two collections are especially noteworthy because they (along with some of Fox's settings) were used by Aaron Copland while composing *Billy the Kid*.¹⁶

Fox and Guion stand apart from the other composers in this genre for several reasons—both were Texans, both had personal experience with cowboys, and both composed numerous rather than just one or two settings of cowboy songs. They also provide a convenient entry point to this survey, because some of their settings of texts raise the question: “What is an art song?” As described earlier, an art song is one that is intended for the concert stage. Harry T. Burleigh's arrangements of spirituals and John Jacob Niles's arrangements of Appalachian folk songs have a respected place in the recital hall and in the art song repertoire. Using their arrangements as a precedent, a similarly broad view of cowboy songs would be that if the setting is appropriate for the recital hall, then it is an art song.

Oscar J. Fox (1879-1961), born on a ranch in Burnet County, Texas, followed the path taken by many American composers of his generation. After years of study in this country, he went overseas (Switzerland, 1896-1899) for further training, followed by two more years of study in New York City. He returned to Texas, settling in San Antonio in 1902.¹⁷ Of his more than 50 songs, he identified nine as cowboy songs and three as “desperado” songs.¹⁸

According to annotations in the scores, only two of Fox's cowboy songs (“Come All Ye Jolly Cowboys” and “Texas Cowboy's Last Song”) did not come from John Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*. Fox drew attention to his role as transmitter rather than creator by preceding his name in the score with the phrase “arranged by” or “arranged and composed by.” He typically relies on the same primary chords used in most Western folk music rather than incorporating the more intricate harmonies that attracted more exploratory composers of his generation. His melodies may undergo slight modification from what is found in Lomax, with the pianist's right hand frequently doubling the voice.

The most unadorned of Fox's settings are “Jesse James,” with its hymn-like texture, and “Old Paint,” which has a waltz-like accompaniment. Other songs, while maintaining his preference for basic chords and a close relation between the voice and the treble in the piano, reveal more freedom and ingenuity. In “Greer County,” for example, as the voice sings

Hurrah for Greer County! The land of the free,
The land of the bedbug, Grasshopper and flea;

the pianist plays the opening phrase of “The Star Spangled Banner.” Later, when we hear

Goodbye to Greer County where blizzards arise,
the wind never ceases, but always remains,¹⁹

more embellished chords and rapidly ascending whole-tone scales heighten the effect of the words. His setting of “Whoopee ti yi yo” is similarly inventive and effective. In a moderate tempo, the lowest note is repeated continuously while above it the right hand plays a repeating figure that first appears in the introduction and then continues through the remainder of the song, while the voice sings a variant of the tune given in Lomax. In this and in his other arrangements, Fox embraces a simplicity and directness that enhances rather than limits the appeal of his songs. While that may result in part from a desire to minimize the technical difficulties that they presented to performers—the accompaniments present few challenges to pianists and the voice part is usually doubled in the accompaniment—the arrangements nevertheless can be very moving.²⁰

David W. Guion (1892-1981), largely self-taught as a composer, studied piano as a child before traveling to Vienna for further instruction under Leopold Godowsky from 1912-1914. Although now thought of primarily as an arranger of the music of African Americans and cowboys, Guion found success in New York City in the early 1930s as a nationally broadcast radio-show host and composer.²¹ As with Fox, some of Guion's settings, such as “All Day on the Prairie” and “Carry Me Home to the Lone Prairie,” are notable for their directness, which works particularly well in “O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie.” In this song Guion enriches the texture through the use of drone-like and repeating figures in the accompaniment and in the third verse where the text turns to

the wild cayotes (sic) will howl o'er me,
In a narrow grave just six by three,
Oh bury me not on the lone prairie.²²

In this tune, the first four notes of the Westminster chime sound over and over, an allusion to the inevitable passing of time.

By contrast, Guion imbues the song “McCaffie's Confession” with a greater sense of freedom. A solitary introductory minor chord is followed by the unaccompanied voice singing the first verse.²³ That melody, repeated throughout the song, is constructed from a five-note scale that conveys an archaic quality. The second verse, in which McCaffie confesses that he “often broke the Sabbath day,” employs a hymn-like, four-part harmonization. Accidentals and discords are reserved until the

end of the verse in which McCaffie tells us that he murdered his wife. The bleakness of the rest of the song is anticipated by prominent discords in the two-measure interlude that follows. A tolling, repeated low bass note accompanies McCaffie's final words, as do dissonances that underscore the grimness of what led to his regrettable demise.

The three songs with texts by Marie Lussi ("Prairie Night Song," "Ride, Cowboy, Ride!," and "The Song of the Whip") differ from the others in that their grandiosity of style, with leaping, full-voice chords, bring to mind not so much the imagery of the West as they do the more effusive, perhaps even exaggerated, style of operetta.

None of the remaining composers had the close contact with cowboys that Fox and Guion did, so it is not surprising that their contributions to the repertoire were smaller. Arthur Farwell (1872-1952), whose arrangement of "The Lone Prairee" (1905) is the earliest of the published songs, is remembered primarily for his interest in and arrangements of American Indian music and as an innovative music publisher.

Charles Ives (1874-1954), the New Englander whose works celebrate that region and range from charming simplicity to bewildering complexity, composed just one cowboy song, "Charlie Rutlage." The poem, which he found in Lomax's collection of cowboy songs, is based on D. J. O'Malley's "A Cowboy's Death."²⁴

Composer and organist Seth Bingham (1882-1972), who taught at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary and was the organist at New York's Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, is, like Ives, an unlikely composer of cowboy songs.²⁵ Nevertheless, in 1930 the H. W. Gray Company published his *Five Cowboy Songs*. Each comes from songs found in Lomax's first edition of *Cowboy Songs*, although three of them ("Days of Forty-Nine," "Root Hog or Die," and "Fuller and Warren") do not describe the cowboy experience. The two that do, "The Dying Cowboy" and "Dogie Song," show Bingham's resourcefulness.

Jack Beeson's (1921-2010) "Cowboy Song" is a setting of Charles Causley's poem of the same name, a poem whose images reveal if not Causley's Cornish heritage, then at least his reluctance to embrace the culture and language of the American West. His words and phrases, for example, bring to mind the English gentleman rather than the Western cowboy: "apple blossom snow," "zithering zephyrs," "teasy bees," "marmalade moon," "boulder eiderdown," "home by tea," "where run the seven geese round," and "I trawl the turning sky."²⁶

Minnesotan Libby Larsen's (b. 1950) *Cowboy Songs*, composed for a friend while in graduate school, is an attractive and popular cycle in which she set three poems: Belle Starr's "Bucking Bronco," Robert Creeley's "Sufi Sam Christian"

(retitled "Lift Me into Heaven Slowly" by Larsen), and the anonymous "Billy the Kid." Each setting is as different as the poem that it portrays.

The most recent composition, André Previn's (b. 1929) "Sallie Chisum remembers Billy the Kid," was commissioned by Barbara Bonney because, as she relates:

(A)llegedly I'm related to Billy the Kid. I was told as a child, "Billy Bonney was Billy the Kid and he came from the same area that your father grew up in." I have a picture of Billy the Kid, and he looks so much like my father that it's terrifying.²⁷

"Sally Chisum remembers Billy the Kid" is a substantial work that is two to three times longer than the other songs that have been described. Previn set the text as a through-composed, or continuous, cycle made up of seven sections, with the conclusion recalling the opening.

Unlike painters, photographers, filmmakers, writers, and composers and performers of popular music, most composers in the classical tradition seemed indifferent to the myths, grandeur, and culture (real or imagined) of the American West. Even to composers with nationalist proclivities, the cowboy song proved largely unappealing. Among the reasons that may have contributed to their indifference, four stand out: the cultural incompatibility of the cosmopolitan Eastern composer with the relatively isolated Western cowhand, the poetry, the music, and the mythic resonance of the cowboy himself.

The cultural divide is as obvious as it is easily imagined. Many aspiring young American composers in the early decades of the twentieth century, following years of study in this country, traveled to Europe to be steeped in that culture and undergo further training. They dreamed of creating major works that not only would be performed but also would earn them critical acclaim—symphonies, concertos, chamber music, opera, and possibly even art songs in the style of Brahms or Debussy. Setting poetry about horses and cattle drives or desperadoes held as little appeal to most of these composers as it did to their imagined audiences.

Owen Wister's *The Virginian*, widely regarded as the first literary Western, serves to make the point. In it Wister uses the difference between "Eastern" and "Western" cultures to create tension between Mary Stark "Molly" Wood's family in Vermont and the "Virginian." Molly, who fled the stifling atmosphere of Bennington (and the suitor she was supposed to marry), becomes the first schoolteacher in an emerging community on the Wyoming frontier. There, she slowly comes to understand, love, and marry the Virginian, a progression that horrifies not only her family but also her entire community. Wister writes,

“[I]n a very few days [after Molly’s return to Bennington for a visit], gossip had it that Molly was engaged to a gambler, a gold miner, an escaped stage robber, and a Mexican bandit; while Mrs. Flynt feared she had married a Mormon.”²⁸

Turning from fiction to biography, David Guion’s fading prominence offers a different perspective, one in which a composer may be put at a disadvantage by associations with the West. He hosted nationally broadcast radio programs in the early 1930s while living in New York City and enjoyed such celebrity that there was a “David Guion Week” in Texas and a commission from the Houston Symphony in 1950. Yet Heidi Ann Cohenour Gordon lists “the typecasting that came with being known as a composer of cowboy songs” as one of the reasons why he has failed to retain his once-prominent position among American composers.²⁹

Marie Lussi, several of whose poems were set to music by Guion, exploits the cultural divide from yet another perspective in *Cowboy Love Song*, her novel about the challenges faced by the young Westerner who aspires to travel east.³⁰ Protagonist Larry Grant is a talented, home-grown, small-town Texas cowboy who dreams of studying voice in New York and having a career as a professional singer. But Grant earns the respect of his friends and community in Texas only when, after practicing riding and roping in secret for two years, he manages to win the local rodeo—and the \$10,000 prize that makes it possible for him and his mother to travel to New York, so he can develop his career as a singer. As if to confirm the preceding points, the two composers who were the most prolific, or the most compatible with the genre—Fox and Guion—were the ones who grew up not in the East but among cowboys, developing a kinship with their culture.

The second reason that so many early twentieth-century composers had little, if any, interest in cowboy music may be because of the nature of the poetry found in so many cowboy songs. With its reliance on rhyme, meter, transparency, and immediacy, cowboy poetry, at least until recent decades, at times seemed invisible to the gatekeepers of the Modernist canon. There are, of course, exceptions. As Lawrence Levine points out in *High Brow/Low Brow*, nineteenth-century Americans were far better versed in Shakespeare than we are today.³¹ It is not surprising, then, to find a parallel between Allen McCandless’s “The Cowboy’s Soliloquy” and Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*. Shakespeare’s Duke Senior, banished to the Forest of Arden, praises his life there:

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.³²

In the third verse of his poem, McCandless paraphrases Shakespeare:

My ceiling the sky, my carpet the grass,
My music the lowing of herds as they pass;
My books are the brooks, my sermons the stones,
My parson’s a wolf on a pulpit of bones.³³

In general, however, cowboy poetry is noted more for its simplicity than its complexity, more for its decisive action than its nuanced gesture. Consequently, the cowboy poet portrays the obvious so we are not left probing the layers of allusion and symbolism so prized by metropolitan Modernists. Consequently, it is not surprising that many composers of art songs find more of interest in the poetry of William Blake and James Agee than they do in D.J. O’Malley and Baxter Black, in the culture of Europe or in the exoticism of the Middle and Far East than they do in the American West. Moreover, given their remoteness from the cowboy experience, one cannot help but wonder under what circumstances composers ever encounter cowboy poetry: probably not in their academic, professional, and social environments.

The third reason that most prominent composers of the early to mid-twentieth century were not interested in the songs of the cowboy may be found in cowboy music itself. Music historian Bill C. Malone asserts that “[t]he cowboy contributed nothing to American music.”³⁴ At first glance that seems outrageous, but upon further reflection it makes sense: unlike the novelty of ragtime’s syncopated rhythms and blues’ altered scale degrees and 12-bar form, one will not find similarly distinctive elements common to cowboy music that distinguish it from traditional folk music.

Aaron Copland, for example, wrote the following about composing the ballet score for *Billy the Kid*:

I have never been particularly impressed with the musical beauties of the cowboy song as such. The words are usually delightful and the manner of singing needs no praise from me. But neither the words nor the delivery are of much use in a purely orchestral ballet score, so I was left with the tunes themselves, which I repeat, are often less than exciting.³⁵

Given the paucity of classical works based upon the folkloric elements of cowboy song, subsequent generations of art composers would seem to have agreed with Copland’s assessment.

Finally, despite its risks and hardships, the cowboy’s life was, for most, a life of choice. The admittedly fanciful images that

the general public had of the cowboy's daily life—settling an argument with fisticuffs, dispensing justice with a pistol or hangman's noose, and living a life close to the earth—are more likely to draw patronizing smiles than inspire the imagination of a composer, even though that distorted image bears little resemblance to the lives that most cowboys lived. Unlike American Indians who faced genocide and forced resettlement on reservations, and African Americans emerging from slavery into Jim Crow, the cowboys of American myth stood on the side of the conquerors. Consequently, unless a composer lived in a culture sympathetic to the cowboys—as did Fox and Guion—he or she would likely be unmoved by poetry reflecting experiences so alien to his or her own.

It is unlikely that many readers of Western novelists Zane Grey or Louis L'Amour or fans of movie cowboy stars Gene Autry or John Wayne will ever hear Andre Previn's "Sallie Chisum remembers Billy the Kid" or any of the other songs that are the focus of this study. And yet through different means of artistic expression—painting, photography, sculpture, film, and music—the seemingly mutually exclusive tastes of dissimilar audiences are satisfied, drawn to that storied time in our nation's history. Though few in number, cowboy songs that were transformed into art songs provide one of the trails to our collective national heritage—the American cowboy. ★

Alphabetical list of the composers and their songs

Jack Beeson	Cowboy Song	1978		Carry Me Home to the Lone Prairie	1937
Seth Bingham	Five Cowboy Songs	1930		The Cowboy's Dream	1933
	Days of Forty-Nine			Cowboy's Meditation	1929
	Root Hog or Die			Home on the Range	1930
	The Dying Cowboy			Little Joe, the Wrangler	1933
	Fuller and Warren			McCaffie's Confession	1930
	Dogie Song			My Cowboy Love-Song	1936
Arthur Farwell	The Lone Prairee	1905		O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie	1931
Oscar J. Fox	Come All Ye Jolly Cowboys	1927		Ol' Paint	1933
	Cowboy's Lament	1923		Pinto	1948
	Greer County	1925		Ride, Cowboy, Ride!	1934
	A Home on the Range	1925		Roll Along, Little Dogies	1947
	Jesse James	1928		Roy Bean	1930
	The Old Chisholm Trail	1924		Song of the Whip	1942
	Old Paint	1927		Texas Cowboy's Meditation	1929
	Prairie Night Song	1937		When the Work's all Done this Fall	1931
	A Prisoner for Life	1928	Charles Ives	Charlie Rutlage	1920/21
	Rounded Up in Glory	1923	Libby Larsen	Cowboy Songs	1979
	Sam Bass	1928		Bucking Bronco	
	Texas Cowboy's Last Song	1927		Lift Me into Heaven Slowly	
	Whoopie ti yi yo	1927		Billy the Kid	
David W. Guion	All Day on the Prairie	1930	André Previn	Sally Chisum remembers Billy the Kid	1994
	The Bold Vaquero	1920			

Notes

- 1 Guy Logsdon, *"The Whorehouse Bells Were Ringing" and Other Songs Cowboys Sing*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), xi.
- 2 Richard W. Stratta, *Cowboys of the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 168. More specifically, Stratta argues that 63 percent of these cowboys were white, 25 percent were black, and 12 percent were Mexican or Mexican American.
- 3 *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th edition, ed. Don Michael Randel (Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003).
- 4 Antonín Dvořák, "Music in America," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (Feb., 1895): 432.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Edward MacDowell, "Folk Song and its Relation to Nationalism in Music," in *Critical and Historical Essays. Lectures delivered at Columbia University by Edward MacDowell*, ed. W.J. Baltzell (Boston: Arthur P. Schmidt, 1912), 146-147. MacDowell asserted in his lecture that: "This being the case, perhaps my statement that the vital principle of folk music in its best state has nothing in common with nationalism (considered in the usual sense of the word), will be better understood. And this will be the proof that nationalism, so-called, is merely an extraneous thing that has no part in pure art. For if we take any melody, even of the most pronounced national type, and merely eliminate the characteristic turns, affectations, or mannerisms, the theme becomes simply music, and retains no touch of nationality. We may even go further; for if we retain the characteristic mannerisms of dress, we may harmonize a folk song in such a manner that it will belie its origin; and by means of this powerful factor (an essentially modern invention) we may even transform a Scotch song, with all its "snap" and character, into a Chinese song, or give it an Arabian flavour. This, to be sure, is possible only to a limited degree; enough, however, to prove to us the power of harmony; and harmony, as I have said, has no part in folk song."
- 7 Charles Hamm, "Dvořák, Nationalism, Myth, and Racism," in *Rethinking Dvořák*, ed. David R. Beveridge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 280.
- 8 Eugene Rowley, *David Guion, "Cowboy Composer" (Prairie Echoes, Piano Music of David Guion (1892-1981)*, Eugene Rowley, pianist; CD recording on Premier Recordings, PRCD 1024, booklet) 5.
- 9 A list of the names and dates of all of the songs is included at the end of this article.
- 10 I looked only for art songs and did not consider choral and instrumental works. Further, I looked only at the titles of art songs and, in so doing, may have passed over a cowboy text because the title did not suggest an obvious connection.
- 11 William Lawrence Chittenden, *Ranch Verses* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1893).
- 12 John A. Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: Sturgis & Walton Company, 1910). Noteworthy collections that appeared without tunes include Clark Stanley's *The Life and Adventures of the American Cow Boy* (1897); N. Howard "Jack" Thorp's *Songs of the Cowboys* (1908); and Charles Siringo's *The Song Companion of a Lone Star Cowboy* (1919), a slim volume of 14 songs. Siringo's autobiographical *A Texas Cowboy* (1885) is a classic account of life on the range.
- 13 Charles J. Finger, *Sailor Chanties and Cowboy Songs* (Gerard, KN: Haldeman-Julius Co., 1923); *Frontier Ballads Heard and Gathered by Charles J. Finger* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Page & Company, 1927).
- 14 Margaret Larkin, *Singing Cowboy: A Book of Western Songs* (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1931).
- 15 John White and George Shackley, *The Lonesome Cowboy Songs of the Plains and Hills* (New York: George T. Worth & Co.); John White and George Shackley, *The Lonesome Cowboy Songs of the Plains and Hills* (New York: George T. Worth & Co.).
- 16 Howard Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 320.
- 17 Carl Weaver, *Oscar J. Fox and His Heritage (The Junior Historian, 1963)*, <http://www.kenfuchs42.net/kfww/Oscar%20J.%20Fox%20and%20His%20Heritage.pdf>
- 18 The desperado songs are "Sam Bass," "Jesse James," and "A Prisoner for Life."
- 19 Oscar J. Fox, *Greer County (A Frontier Ballad)* (New York: Carl Fischer Inc., 1925).
- 20 For more on Fox's life and career, see S.W. Pease, "Oscar Julius Fox," *Handbook of Texas Music*, 2nd edition, ed. Laurie E. Jasinski (Denton, Texas: Texas State Historical Association, 202) 222-223.
- 21 For more on Guion's life and career, see James Dick, "David Wendel Guion," *Handbook of Texas Music*, 2nd edition, ed. Laurie E. Jasinski, 258-259.
- 22 David W. Guion, *O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie (The Dying Cowboy)* (New York: Carl Fischer Inc., 1931).
- 23 In addition to unaccompanied singing, Guion occasionally employs special vocal effects, asking the singer to speak (two of the verses in "When the Work's all Done this Fall" and a phrase in "McCaffie's Confession"), whistle (the postlude in "All Day on the Prairie"), and use falsetto and shout phrases ("The Bold Vaquero"). According to Heidi Ann Cohenour Gordon, Guion claimed—erroneously—that "The Bold Vaquero" was the first cowboy song to be set as an art song. Heidi Ann Cohenour Gordon, "The Songs of David W. Guion" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 2008), 11.
- 24 "A Cowboy's Death," which quickly gained popularity, first appeared in the July 11, 1891, issue of *Stock Grower's Journal*, a Miles City, Montana weekly.
- 25 *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, s.v. Bingham, Seth.
- 26 Jack Beeson, *Cowboy Song* (New York: Galaxy Music Corporation, 1989).
- 27 *Sallie Chisum remembers Billy the Kid*. CD recording on London 289 455 511-2. "A Conversation with Barbara Bonney," CD booklet, 5-6.
- 28 Owen Wister, *The Virginian: A Horseman of the Plains* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1902, 17th printing, 1974), 224.
- 29 Gordon, "The Songs of David W. Guion," 6-7.
- 30 Mari Lussi, *Cowboy Love Song* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Lilly Printing Company, 1935).
- 31 Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow / Lowbrow* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 4.
- 32 *As You Like It*, ed. Alan Brissenden (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 2.1.15-17. References are to act, scene, and lines.
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Sonobeat Records: Pioneering the Austin Sound in the '60s

By Ricky Stein (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014). \$19.99 paperback. 128 pp. ISBN 978-1-62619-245-4.

Also available in e-book format.

A father-son collaborative effort, Sonobeat Records was born out of FM radio and live remote broadcasts and recordings. Bill Josey, Sr., and his son, Bill Josey, Jr. (aka Rim Kelly), recorded dozens of local bands, singer-songwriters, and musicians between 1967 and 1976. The Joseys did not limit themselves to a specific sound or genre. They sought music that was live, a sound that was original and unique. As Ricky Stein writes in his new book, *Sonobeat Records*, “[T]he two music enthusiasts were able to capture the sounds of a budding musical mecca, a city that would proclaim itself the live music capital of the world in decades to come.”

Sonobeat recorded rock, country, folk, jazz, R&B, and gospel and included hundreds of artists, some of whom who were at the top of their game at the time and others who, although novices, went on to become legendary beyond Austin. From Afro-Caravan to Johnny Winter, the Joseys had an ear for quality music that helped build a foundation for the current Texas music scene. In an era when independent and small record labels were mere stepping stones to major record companies, Sonobeat had a strong relationship with radio through the Joseys and was able to promote many local musicians and live music venues.

Stein points out that while New York, Los Angeles, Nashville, Chicago, and other musical hotbeds made their names because of studios and major record labels, the Austin scene began with a much less commercial slant: “Instead, it was the musicians themselves who formed the bedrock of what would become the world-renowned Austin music community.”

Sonobeat founders Bill Josey and Rim Kelly both worked in the radio industry, which allowed them unique access to the growing live-music scene. Much of Sonobeat’s catalog was recorded live—or in live music venues on borrowed or home-crafted recording equipment, fashioned as much for portability as for fidelity.

Stein states that until the late 1960s, “Austin’s musical history was not particularly unique.... [T]here was little to distinguish Austin’s musical landscape from that of any other mid-sized college town.” He adds that live music at fraternity parties and festivals generally covered Top-40 hits and classics.

By the late 1960s, New York City dominated the sheet-music industry and much of the recording industry, and Los Angeles and San Francisco were emerging as the younger, hipper, West Coast center of the music business. However, no one was blending musical styles in quite the same way as Austin musicians.

Sonobeat Records chronicled these important musical developments taking place in Austin. In addition to recording such innovative psychedelic rock groups as Shiva’s Headband, Sonobeat captured the emerging progressive country elements of such artists as Rusty Weir, while also including in its catalog the seminal blues-rock guitarist, Johnny Winter, who was based in Beaumont, Texas, but frequently performed in Austin.

In fact, a December 7, 1968, *Rolling Stone* magazine article, which focused on Texas artists Janis Joplin, Doug Sahm, Steve Miller, and Mother Earth, also poured lavish praise on the “hundred and thirty pound cross-eyed albino with long fleecy hair playing some of the gutsiest fluid guitar you have ever heard”—a 23-year-old Johnny Winter.

As Stein observes, “By recording Austin’s local talent, [Sonobeat] gave voice to the emerging scene and offered a glimpse of what the city would soon become.” He adds another important point later in the book: “In many ways, Sonobeat Records’ commercial shortcomings early on in its existence played as important a role in the formation of the music scene as did its later successes. Because Sonobeat never became a goliath record label...each release would gain a sense of allure that comes with limited quantity and availability.”

Stein asserts that Sonobeat did just enough for the Austin music scene to galvanize Austin musicians without creating a commercial hub that would inundate the city within its own industry, and he credits this to the way Austin was able to build a reputation as a music town relatively free of the restraints of over-commercialization.

Diana Finlay Hendricks

Progressive Country: How the 1970s Transformed the Texan in Popular Culture

By Jason Mellard (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013). \$29.95 cloth. 276 pp. ISBN 978-0-292-75300-6.

Also available in e-book format.

In 1974, Jan Reid's influential *The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock* traced the development of Austin's early-1970s music scene, detailing the trend-shifting rise of musicians such as Willie Nelson and Jerry Jeff Walker. Forty years later, with the publication of Jason Mellard's *Progressive Country: How the 1970s Transformed the Texan in Popular Culture*, Reid's book now has a worthy companion, perfect to nestle beside it on the bookshelf. The new book has a larger scope, however, as Mellard traces not only the how the politics, music, and literature of pre-1970s Texas made for the atmosphere described in Reid's book, but also how the Texan circa 1975 has transformed the popular image of the type.

Although the music of the Armadillo World Headquarters' scene sits at the heart of the text, one real strength of Mellard's book lies in the fact that he's able to apply his investigation beyond the music and follow the roots of this shift in Texan-ness all the way out to branches as far-reaching as the Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush eras and mass-media instances such as *Dallas* and *Urban Cowboy*. Chief among his perceptive uses of research is the finding that the Texan was never, at least in the second half of the twentieth century, a fixed point from which the 1970s cosmic cowboys of the Austin music scene had to shift. The "Typical Texan" Mellard teases out though his extensive look into descriptions of the breed "did not denote specific men who actually existed, but a persona to be desired, a projection of the cowboy that individuals within and without the state's borders continually found ways to appropriate." Each era—and, indeed, each demographic within each era—has its spot at the defining table in establishing the meaning of "Texan."

Therein sits a bigger reason to champion Mellard's findings: his search for Texas includes groups often left from the discussion, be it scholars such as Américo Paredes or gubernatorial candidates such as Frances "Sissy" Farenthold and Ann Richards. Equally impressive are the insights offered on the ways that coalitions outside the traditional Anglo power structure helped cultivate the ever-changing image of Texanhood, especially the explanation of the African-American influence in Texas party politics and the importance of movements made up of groups such as the Brown Berets.

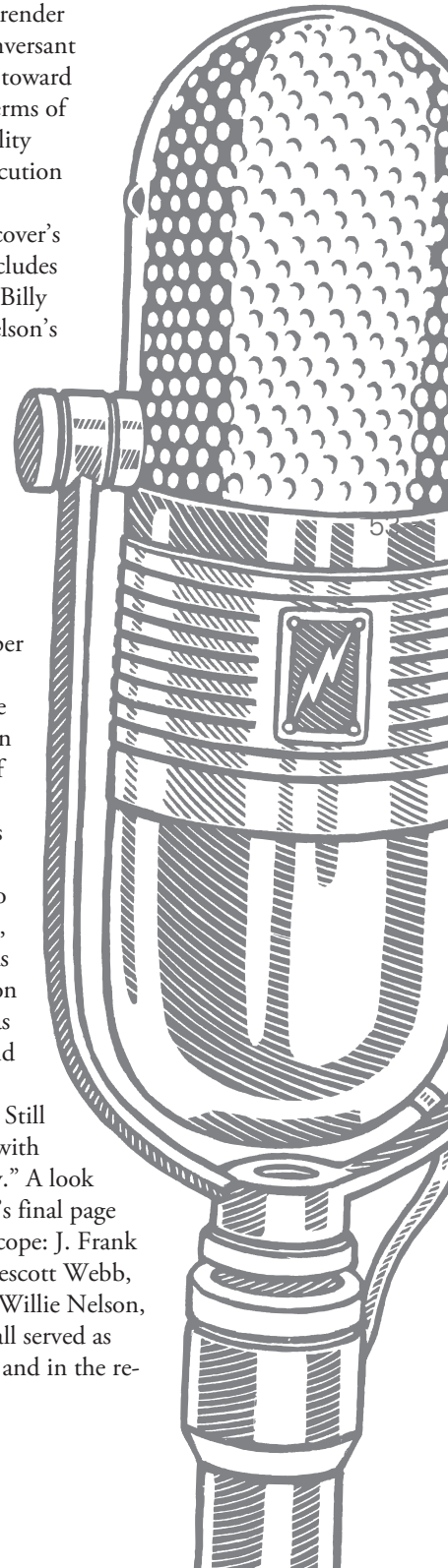
The clarion call that concludes the book offers that "the new millenium's first decade demonstrated one thing." According to Mellard, the rest of the world's image of the Texan has been usurped by politicians dressing up as cowboys, "[e]mbodied in Bush's 'swagger' of 2004 and Perry's 'fed-up' pretensions of 2011," with a modern image of the Texan which "persists as a performative site of exclusionary renditions of American nationality." Mellard isn't in denial about these appropriations of image, stating that the "symbols will not leave us anytime soon. We may combat them or divest from them, but we

cannot wish them away." The boon in this section of the book isn't the admission, however, but the solution.

"Why not, then," Mellard writes, "contest them again, re-fashion and re-figure them to render 'the Texan' more thoroughly conversant in its historical *tejanidad*, geared toward interpreting its frontier past in terms of inclusion, adaptability, and equality rather than combativeness, persecution complexes, and insularity?"

The title of the book and the cover's concert-poster image—which includes musicians Waylon Jennings and Billy Joe Shaver, along with Willie Nelson's pal Darrell Royal, in prominent positions—may lead readers to believe that the discussion of the music scene will dominate the book, à la Jan Reid's *The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock*. However, Mellard had something bigger in mind; he uses the music at the heart of Austin as a springboard to a deeper examination of Texas culture. Similarly, some critics might take exception to the placing of Austin at the heart of the descriptions of Texas in the book, but Mellard argues convincingly that Austin's placement is warranted, while still giving plenty of discussion to other major cities, such as Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio. I was pleased to see how much attention was paid to underestimated Texas writers, including Bud Shrake and Gary Cartwright, who, to usurp Waylon Jennings's "Bob Wills is Still the King," have "as much to do with why we're down here as anybody." A look at the list of Texans on the book's final page shows the breadth of Mellard's scope: J. Frank Dobie, Roy Bedichek, Walter Prescott Webb, La Raza Unida, Barbara Jordan, Willie Nelson, Larry L. King, and Doug Sahm all served as both integral figures in the book and in the re-defining of "the Texan."

Chad Hammett



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